



No. CLXI.]

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# NATURE'S REVOLT. FEVER STRICKEN!!!

## THE GOLDFIELDS.

*'How quickly Nature falls into Revolt  
When Gold becomes her object!'*

SHAKESPEARE.

'IN LIFE'S PLAY the PLAYER of the other side IS HIDDEN from us. WE KNOW that his play is ALWAYS FAIR, JUST, and PATIENT, but we also know to OUR COST that HE NEVER OVERLOOKS A MISTAKE. *It's for you to find out WHY YOUR EARS ARE BOXED.*'—HUXLEY.

"I may say that for over ten years I have used ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' pretty freely, and, under trying conditions of life and climate, have never needed any other Medicine while yours was procurable. In tropical Queensland and the TERRIBLY HOT FEVER-STRICKEN GOLDFIELDS of West Australia I have put my faith solely in Old 'ENO,' and I am happy to say always pulled through by its help. In New Guinea—A NOTED FEVER SPOT—ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' worked marvels among a party of gold miners of which I was the leader. Every morning we religiously took a dose of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT,' and FEVER LOST ITS TERRORS. You are at liberty to make any use of this you like.—Yours truly, 'W. S.' Sydney, New South Wales, Nov. 27, 1895."

## BANGKOK, SIAM.

"We have for the last four years used ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' during several important survey expeditions in the Malay Peninsula, Siam, and Cambodia, and have undoubtedly derived great benefit from it. In one instance only was one of our party attacked with fever during that period, and that happened after our supply of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' had run out. When making long marches under the powerful rays of a vertical sun, or travelling through swampy districts, we have used ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' two or three times a day. ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' acts as a gentle aperient, keeps the blood cool and healthy, and WARDS OFF FEVER. We have pleasure in voluntarily testifying to the value of your preparation and our firm belief in its efficacy. We never go into the jungle without it, and have also recommended it to others.—Yours truly, Commander A. J. LOTTIS, his Siamese Majesty's Hydrographer; E. C. DAVIDSON, Superintendent Siamese Government Telegraphs, Bangkok, Siam."

## FEVERS, BLOOD, POISONS, &c.

**E**GYPT, CAIRO.—"Since my arrival in Egypt, in August last, I have on three occasions been attacked by fever; on the first occasion I lay in hospital six weeks. The last attacks have been completely repulsed in a short time by the use of your valuable 'FRUIT SALT,' to which I owe my present health at the very least, if not my life itself. Heartfelt gratitude for my restoration impels me to add my testimony to the already overwhelming store of the same, and in so doing I feel that I am but obeying the dictates of duty.—Gratefully yours, A CORPORAL, 19th Hussars.—Mr. J. C. ENO."

## EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA, AMERICA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND.

**I**MPORTANT TO ALL TRAVELLERS.—"Please send me half-a-dozen bottles of ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' I have tried ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' in America, India, Egypt, and on the Continent for almost every complaint, fever included, with the most satisfactory results. I strongly recommend it to all Travellers; and am never without it.—Yours faithfully, AN ANGLO-INDIAN OFFICIAL."

**CAUTION.**—Examine each Bottle, and see that the Capsule is marked ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT.' Without it, you have been imposed on by a worthless imitation.

Prepared only at Eno's 'Fruit Salt' Works, London, S.E., by J. C. Eno's Patent.



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# LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

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MARCH 1896.

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## *Old Mr. Tredgold.<sup>1</sup>*

A STORY OF TWO SISTERS.

BY MRS. OLIPHANT.

### CHAPTER XXXVII.

WHEN Katherine came into the room again at the call of her father's solicitor it was with a sense of being unduly disturbed and interfered with at a moment when she had a right to repose. She was perhaps half angry with herself that her thoughts were already turning so warmly to the future, and that Stella's approaching arrival, and the change in Stella's fortunes which it would be in her power to make, were more and more occupying the foreground of her mind, and crowding out with its bright colours the sombre spectacle which was just over, and all the troublous details of the past. When a portion of one's life has been brought to an end by the closure of death, something to look forward to is the most natural and best of alleviations. It breaks up the conviction of the irrevocable, and opens to the soul once more the way before it, which, on the other hand, is closed up and ended. Katherine had allowed that thought to steal into her mind, to occupy the entire horizon. Stella was coming home, not merely back, which was all that she had allowed herself to say before, but home to her own house, or rather to that which was something

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1895, by M. O. W. Oliphant.

still more hers than her own by being her sister's. There had been, no doubt, grievances against Stella in Katherine's mind, in the days when her own life had been entirely overshadowed by her sister's; but these were long gone, long lost in boundless, remorseful (notwithstanding that she had nothing to blame herself with) affection and longing for Stella, who after all was her only sister, her only near relation in the world. She had begun to permit herself to dwell on that delightful thought. It had been a sort of forbidden pleasure while her father lay dead in the house, and she had felt that every thought was due to him, that she had not given him enough, had not shown that devotion to him of which one reads in books, the triumph of filial love over every circumstance. Katherine had not been to her father all that a daughter might have been, and in these dark days she had much and unjustly reproached herself with it. But now everything had been done for him that he could have wished to be done, and his image had gone aside amid the shadows of the past, and she had permitted herself to look forward, to think of Stella and her return. It was a great disturbance and annoyance to be called again, to be brought back from the contemplation of those happier things to the shadow of the grave once more—or, still worse, the shadow of business, as if she cared how much money had come to her or what was her position. There would be plenty—plenty to make Stella comfortable she knew, and beyond that what did Katherine care?

The men stood up again as she came in with an air of respect which seemed to her exaggerated and absurd—old Mr. Turny, who had known her from a child and had allowed her to open the door for him and run errands for him many a day, and the solicitor, who in his infrequent visits had never paid any attention to her at all. They stood on each side letting her pass as if into some prison of which they were going to defend the doors. Dr. Burnet, who was there too, closely buttoned and looking very grave, gave her a seat; and then she saw her Uncle Robert Tredgold sunk down in a chair, with Mr. Sturgeon's bag in his arms, staring about him with lack-lustre eyes. She gave him a little nod and encouraging glance. How small a matter it would be to provide for that unfortunate so that he should never need to carry Mr. Sturgeon's bag again! She sat down and looked round upon them with for the first time a sort of personal satisfaction in the thought that she was so wholly independent of them and all that it was in their power to do—the mistress of her own house, not obliged to think of anyone's pleasure but her own. It was on her lips to say

something hospitable, kind, such as became the mistress of the house ; she refrained only from the recollection that, after all, it was her father's funeral day.

'Miss Tredgold,' said the solicitor, 'we have now, I am sorry to say, a very painful duty to perform.'

Katherine looked at him without the faintest notion of his meaning, encouraging him to proceed with a faint smile.

'I have gone through your late lamented father's papers most carefully. As you yourself said yesterday, I have possessed his confidence for many years, and all his business matters have gone through my hands. I supposed that as I had not been consulted about any change in his will, he must have employed a local solicitor. That, however, does not seem to have been the case, and I am sorry to inform you, Miss Tredgold, that the only will that can be found is that of eighteen hundred and seventy-one.'

'Yes?' said Katherine indifferently interrogative, as something seemed to be expected of her.

'Yes—the will of eighteen hundred and seventy-one—nearly eight years ago—drawn out when your sister was in full possession of her empire over your late father, Miss Tredgold.'

'Yes,' said Katherine, but this time without any interrogation. She had a vague recollection of that will, of Mr. Sturgeon's visit to the house, and the far-off sound of stormy interviews between her father and his solicitor, of which the girls in their careless fashion, and especially Stella, had made a joke.

'You probably don't take in the full significance of what I say.'

'No,' said Katherine with a smile, 'I don't think that I do.'

'I protested against it at the time. I simply cannot comprehend it now. It is almost impossible to imagine that in present circumstances he could have intended it to stand ; but here it is, and nothing else. Miss Tredgold, by this will the whole of your father's property is left over your head to your younger sister.'

'To Stella!' she cried, with a sudden glow of pleasure, clapping her hands. The men about sat and stared at her, Mr. Turny in such consternation that his jaw dropped as he gazed. Bob Tredgold was by this time beyond speech, glaring into empty space over the bag in his arms.

Then something, whether in her mind or out of it, suggested by the faces round her struck Katherine with a little chill. She looked round upon them again, and she was dimly aware that someone, behind her, who could only be Dr. Burnet, made a step forward and stood behind her chair. Then she drew a long breath.

'I am not sure that I understand yet. I am glad Stella has it—oh, very glad! But do you mean that I—am left out? Do you mean—— I am afraid,' she said, after a pause, with a little gasp, 'that is not quite just. Do you mean really everything—*everything*, Mr. Sturgeon?'

'Everything. There is, of course, your mother's money, which no one can touch, and there is a small piece of land—to build yourself a cottage on, which was all you would want, he said.'

Katherine sat silent a little after this. Her first thought was that she was balked then altogether in her first personal wish, the great delight and triumph of setting Stella right and restoring to her her just share in the inheritance. This great disappointment struck her at once, and almost brought the tears to her eyes. Stella would now have it all of her own right, and would never know, or at least believe, what had been Katherine's loving intention. She felt this blow. In a moment she realised that Stella would not believe it—that she would think any assertion to that effect to be a figment, and remain fully assured that her sister would have kept everything to herself if she had had the power. And this hurt Katherine beyond expression. She would have liked to have had that power! Afterwards there came into her mind a vague sense of old injustice and unkindness to herself, the contemptuous speech about the cottage, and that this was all she would want. Her father thought so; he had thought so always, and so had Stella. It never occurred to Katherine that Stella would be anxious to do her justice, as she would have done to Stella. That was an idea that never entered her mind at all. She was thrown back eight years ago to the time when she lived habitually in the cold shade. After all, was not that the one thing that she had been certain of all her life? Was it not a spell which had never been broken, which never could be broken? She murmured to herself dully: 'A cottage—which was all I should want.'

'I said to your father at the time everything that could be said.' Mr. Sturgeon wanted to show his sympathy, but he felt that, thoroughly as everybody present must be persuaded that old Tredgold was an old beast, it would not do to say so in his own house on his funeral day.

The other executor said nothing except 'Tchich, tchich!' but he wiped his bald head with his handkerchief and internally thanked everything that he knew in the place of God—that dark power called Providence and other such—that Katherine Tredgold

had refused to have anything to say to his Fred. Dr. Burnet was not visible at all to Katherine except in a long mirror opposite, where he appeared like a shadow behind her chair.

'And this poor man,' said Katherine, looking towards poor Bob Tredgold, with his staring eyes; 'is there nothing for him?'

'Not a penny. I could have told you that; I have told him that often enough. I've known him from a boy. He shall keep his corner in my office all the same. I didn't put him there, though he thinks so, for his brother's sake.'

'He shall have a home in the cottage—when it is built,' said Katherine, with a curious smile; and then she became aware that in both these promises, the lawyer's and her own, there was a bitter tone—an unexpressed contempt for the man who was her father, and who had been laid in his grave that day.

'I hope,' she said, 'this is all that is necessary to-day; and may I now, if you will not think it ungracious, bid you good-bye? I shall understand it all better when I have a little time to think.'

She paused, however, again after she had shaken hands with them. 'There is still one thing. I am going to meet my sister when she arrives. May I have the—the happiness of telling her? I had meant to give her half, and it is a little disappointment; but I should like at least to carry the news. Thanks; you must address to her here. Of course she will come at once here—to her own home.'

She scarcely knew whose arm it was that was offered to her, but took it mechanically and went out, not quite clear as to where she was going, in the giddiness of the great change.

'This is a strange hearing,' Dr. Burnet said.

'How kind of you to stand by me! Yes, it is strange; and I was pleasing myself with the idea of giving back the house and her share of everything besides to Stella. I should have liked to do that.'

'It is to be hoped,' he said, 'that she will do the same by you.'

'Oh, no!' she cried with a half laugh, 'that's impossible.' Then, after a pause, 'you know there's a husband and children to be thought of. And what I will have is really quite enough for me.'

'There is one thing at your disposal as you please,' he said in a low voice. 'I have not changed, Katherine, all these years.'

'Dr. Burnet! It makes one's heart glad that you are so good a man!'

'Make *me* glad, that will be better,' he said.

Katherine shook her head but said nothing. And human nature is so strange that Dr. Burnet, after making this profession of devotion, which was genuine enough, did not feel so sorry as he ought to have done that she still shook her head as she disappeared up the great stairs.

Katherine went into her room a very different woman from the Katherine who had left it not half-an-hour before. Then she had entertained no doubt that this was her own house in which she was, this her own room, where in all probability she would live all her life. She had intended that Stella should have the house, and yet that there should always be a nook for herself in which the giver of the whole, half by right and wholly by love, should remain, something more than a guest. Would Stella think like that now that the tables were turned, that it was Katherine who had nothing and she all? Katherine did not for a moment imagine that this would be the case. Without questioning herself on the subject, she unconsciously proved how little confidence she had in Stella by putting away from her mind all idea of remaining here. She had no home; she would have no home unless or until the cottage was built for which her father had in mockery, not in kindness, left her the site. She looked round upon all the familiar things which had been about her all her life; already the place had taken another aspect to her. It was not hers any longer, it was a room in her sister's house. She wondered whether Stella would let her take her favourite things—a certain little cabinet, a writing table, some of the pictures. But she did not feel any confidence that Stella would allow her to do so. Stella liked to have a house nicely furnished, not to see gaps in the furniture. That was a small matter, but it was characteristic of the view which Katherine instinctively took of the whole situation. And it would be vain to say that it did not affect her. It affected her strongly, but not as the sudden deprivation of all things might be supposed to affect a sensitive mind. She had no anticipation of any catastrophe of the kind, and yet now that it had come she did not feel that she was unprepared for it. It was not a thing which her mind rejected as impossible, which her heart struggled against. Now that it had happened, it fitted in well enough to the life that had gone before.

Her father had never cared for her, and he had loved Stella. Stella was the one to whom everything naturally came. Poor Stella had been unnaturally depressed, thrown out of her triumphant place for these six years; but her father, even when he had

uttered that calm execration which had so shaken Katherine's nerves but never his, had not meant any harm to Stella. He had not been able to do anything against her. Katherine remembered to have seen him seated at his bureau with that large blue envelope in his hand. This showed that he had taken the matter into consideration; but it had not proved possible for him to disinherit Stella—a thing which everybody concluded had been done as soon as she left him. Katherine remembered vaguely even that she had seen him chuckling over that document, locking it up in his drawer as if there was some private jest of his own involved. It was the kind of jest to please Mr. Tredgold. The idea of such a discovery, of the one sister who was sure being disappointed, and the other who expected nothing being raised to the heights of triumph, all by nothing more than a scratch of his pen, was sure to please him. She could almost hear him chuckling again at her own sudden and complete overthrow. When she came thus far Katherine stopped herself suddenly with a quick flush and sense of guilt. She would not consciously blame her father, but she retained the impression on her mind of his chuckle over her discomfiture.

Thus it will be seen that Katherine's pain in the strange change was reduced by the fact that there was no injured love to feel the smart. She recognised that it was quite a thing that had been likely, though she had not thought of it before, that it was a thing that other people would recognise as likely when they heard of it. Nobody, she said to herself, would be very much surprised. It was unnatural, now she came to think of it, that she should have had even for a moment the upper hand and the extreme gratification, not to say superiority, of restoring Stella. Perhaps it was rather a mean thing to have desired it—to have wished to lay Stella under such an obligation, and to secure for herself that blessedness of giving which everybody recognised. Her mind turned with a sudden impulse of shame to this wish, that had been so strong in it. Everybody likes to give; it is a selfish sort of pleasure. You feel yourself for the moment a good genius, a sort of providence, uplifted above the person, whoever it may be, upon whom you bestow your bounty. He or she has the inferior position, and probably does not like it at all. Stella was too careless, too ready to grasp whatever she could get, to feel this very strongly; but even Stella, instead of loving her sister the better for hastening to her with her hands full, might have resented the fact that she owed to Katherine's gift what ought to



have been hers by right. It was perhaps a poor thing after all. Katherine began to convince herself that it was a poor thing—to have wished to do that. Far better that Stella should have what she had a right to by her own right and not through any gift.

Then Katherine began to try to take back the thread of the thoughts which had been in her mind before she was called downstairs to speak to those men. Her first trial resulted merely in a strong sensation of dislike to 'those men' and resentment, which was absurd, for, after all, it was not they who had done it. She recalled them to her mind, or rather the image of them came into it, with a feeling of angry displeasure. Mr. Sturgeon, the solicitor, had in no way been offensive to Katherine. He had been indignant, he had been sorry, he had been, in fact, on her side; but she gave him no credit for that. And the bald head of the other seemed to her to have a sort of twinkle as of mockery in it, though, to tell the truth, poor Mr. Turny's face underneath was much troubled and almost ashamed to look at Katherine after being instrumental in doing her so much harm. She wondered with an intuitive perception whether he were not very glad now that she had refused Fred? And then with a leap her mind went back to other things. Would they all be very glad now? Would the Rector piously thank heaven, which for his good had subjected him to so small a pang, by way of saving him later from so great a disappointment? Would the doctor be glad? Even though he had made that very nice speech to her—that generous and faithful profession of attachment still—must not the doctor, too, be a little glad? And then Katherine's mind for a moment went circling back into space, as it were—into an unknown world to which she had no clue. He who had disappeared there, leaving no sign, would he ever hear, would he ever think, could it touch him one way or another? Probably it would not touch him in any way. He might be married to some woman; he might have a family of children round him. He might say, 'Oh, the Tredgolds! I used to see a good deal of them. And so Lady Somers has the money after all? I always thought that was how it would end.' And perhaps he would be glad, too, that Katherine, who was the unlucky one, the one always left in the cold shade, whatever happened, had never been anything more to him than a passing fancy—a figure flitting by as in a dream.

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A WHOLE week had still to pass before the arrival of the *Aurungzebe*. After such a revolution and catastrophe as had happened, there is always a feeling in the mind that the stupendous change that is about to ensue should come at once. But it is very rare indeed that it does so. There is an inevitable time of waiting, which to some spirits clinging to the old is a reprieve, but to others an intolerable delay. Katherine was one of those to whom the delay was intolerable. She would have liked to get it all over, to deposit the treasure, as it were, at her sister's feet, and so to get away, she did not know where, and think of it no more.

She was not, as she now assured herself, so very badly off. The amount of her mother's fortune was about five hundred a year—quite a tolerable income for a woman alone, with nobody to think of but herself. And as Katherine had not wanted the money, or at least more than a part of it (for Mr. Tredgold had considered it right at all times that a girl with an income of her own should pay for her own dress), a considerable sum had accumulated as savings which would have been of great use to her now, and built for her that cottage to which her father had doomed her, had it not been that almost all of it had been taken during those five years past for Stella, who was always in need, and had devoured the greater part of Katherine's income besides. She had thus no nest egg, nothing to build the cottage, unless Stella paid her back, which was a probability upon which Katherine did not much reckon. It was curious, even to herself, to find that she instinctively did not reckon on Stella at all. She was even angry with herself for this, and felt that she did not do Stella justice, yet always recurred unconsciously to the idea that there was nothing to look for, nothing to be reckoned on, but her five hundred a year, which surely, she said to herself, would be quite enough. She and old Hannah, from whom she did not wish to separate herself, could live upon that, even with a residue for poor Robert Tredgold, who had returned to his desk in the dreariest disappointment and whose living was at Mr. Sturgeon's mercy. Stella would not wish to hear of that disreputable relation, and yet perhaps she might be got to provide for him if only to secure that he should never cross her path.

Katherine's thoughts were dreary enough as she lived through these days, in the house that was no longer hers; but she had a still harder discipline to go through in the visits of her neighbours, among whom the wonderful story of Mr. Tredgold's will began to circulate at once. They had been very kind to her, according to the usual fashion of neighbourly kindness. There had been incessant visits and inquiries ever since the interest of the place had been quickened by the change for the worse in the old man's state, and on his death Katherine had received many offers of help and companionship, even from people she knew slightly. The ladies about were all anxious to be permitted to come and 'sit with her,' to take care of her for a day, or more than a day, to ensure her from being alone. Mrs. Shanks and Miss Mildmay, though neither of these ladies liked to disturb themselves for a common occasion, were ready at an hour's notice to have gone to her, to have been with her during the trying period of the funeral, and they were naturally among the first to enter the house when its doors were open, its shutters unbarred, and the broad light of the common day streamed once more into the rooms. Everything looked so exactly as it used to do, they remarked to each other as they went in, leaving the Midge considerably the worse for wear, and Mr. Perkins, the driver, none the better at the door. Exactly the same! The gilding of the furniture in the gorgeous drawing-room was not tarnished, nor the satin dimmed of its lustre, by Mr. Tredgold's death. The servants, perhaps, were a little less confident, shades of anxiety were on the countenance of the butler and the footman; they did not know whether they would be servants good enough for Lady Somers. Even Mrs. Simmons—who did not, of course, appear—was doubtful whether Lady Somers would retain her, notwithstanding all the dainties which Simmons had prepared for her youth; and a general sense of uneasiness was in the house. But the great drawing-room, with all its glow and glitter, did not show any sympathetic shadow. The two fireplaces shone with polished brass and steel, and the reflection of the blazing fires, though the windows were open—which was a very extravagant arrangement the ladies thought, though quite in the Tredgold way. And yet the old gentleman was gone! and Katherine, hitherto the dispenser of many good things and accustomed all her life to costly house-keeping, was left like any poor lady with an income of five hundred a year. Both Mrs. Shanks and Miss Mildmay, who put firebricks in their fireplaces and were very frugal in all their

ways, and paid their visits in the Midge, had as much as that. No one could be expected to keep up a house of her own and a couple of servants on that. But Stella surely would do something for her sister, Mrs. Shanks said. Miss Mildmay was still shaking her head in reply to this when they entered the drawing-room, where Katherine advanced to meet them in her black dress. She had ceased to sit behind the screens in that part of the room which she had arranged for herself. The screens were folded back, the room was again one large room all shining with its gilded chairs and cabinets, its Florentine tables, its miles of glowing Aubusson carpet. She was the only blot upon its brightness, with her heavy crape and her pale face.

'My dear Katherine, my dearest Katherine,' the old ladies said, enfolding her one after the other in the emphatic silence of a long embrace. This was meant to express something more than words could say—and, indeed, there were few words which could have adequately expressed the feelings of the spectators. 'So your old brute of a father has gone at last, and a good riddance, and has cheated you out of every penny he could take away from you, after making a slave of you all these years!' Such words as these would have given but a feeble idea of the feelings of these ladies, but it is needless to say that it would have been impossible to say them except in some as yet undiscovered Palace of Truth. But each old lady held the young one fast, and pressed a long kiss upon her cheek, which answered the same purpose. When she emerged from these embraces Katherine looked a little relieved, but still more pale.

'Katherine, my dear, it is impossible not to speak of it,' said Mrs. Shanks; 'you know it must be in our minds all the while. Are you going to do anything, my dear child, to dispute this dreadful will?'

'Jane Shanks and I,' said Miss Mildmay, 'have talked of nothing else since we heard of it; not that I believe you will do anything against it, but I wish you had a near friend who would, Katherine. A near friend is the thing. I have never been very much in favour of marrying, but I should like you to marry for that.'

'In order to dispute my father's will?' said Katherine. 'Dear Miss Mildmay, you know I don't want to be rude, but I will not even hear it discussed.'

'But Katherine, Katherine——'

'Please not a word! I am quite satisfied with papa's will. I

had intended to do—something of the sort myself, if I had ever had the power. You know, which is something pleasanter to talk of, that the *Aurungzebe* has been signalled, and I am going to meet Stella to-morrow.'

The two old ladies looked at each other. 'And I suppose,' said Mrs. Shanks, 'you will bring her home here.'

'Stella has seen a great deal since she was here,' said Miss Mildmay, 'I should not think she would come, Katherine, if that is what you wish. She will like something more in the fashion—or perhaps more out of the fashion—in the grand style, don't you know, like her husband's old house. She will turn up her nose at all this, and at all of us, and perhaps at you too. Stella was never like you, Katherine. If she falls into a great fortune all at once there will be no bounds to her. She'll probably sell this place, and turn you out.'

'She may not like the place, and neither do I,' said Katherine with a flash; 'if she wishes to part with it I shall certainly not oppose her. You must not speak so of my sister.'

'And what shall you do, Katherine, my dear?'

'I am going away,' cried Katherine; 'I have always intended to go away. I have a piece of land to build a cottage on.' She made a pause, for she had never in words stated her intentions before. 'Papa knew what I should like,' she said, with the rising of a sob in her throat. The sense of injury now and then overcame even her self-control. 'In the meantime perhaps we may go abroad, Hannah and I; isn't it always the right thing when you are in mourning and trouble to go abroad?'

'My dear girl,' said Miss Mildmay solemnly, 'how far do you think you can go abroad—you and your maid—upon five hundred a year?'

'Can't we?' said Katherine, confused; 'oh, yes, we have very quiet ways. I am not extravagant, I shall want no carriage or—anything.'

'Do you know how much an hotel costs, Katherine? You and your maid couldn't possibly live for less than a pound a day—a pound a day means three hundred and sixty-five pounds a year—and that without a pin, without a shoe, without a bit of ribbon or a button for your clothes, still less with anything new to put on. How could you go abroad on that? It is impossible—and with the ideas you have been brought up on, everything so extravagant and ample—I can't imagine what you can be thinking of, a practical girl like you.'

'She might go to a *pension*, Ruth Mildmay. *Pensions* are much cheaper than hotels.'

'I think I see Katherine in a *pension*! With a napkin done up in a ring to last a week, and tablecloths to match!'

'Well, then,' said Katherine, with a feeble laugh, 'if that is so I must stay at home. Hannah and I will find a little house somewhere while my cottage is building.'

'Hannah can never do all the work of a house,' said Miss Mildmay, 'Hannah has been accustomed to her ease as well as you. You would need at least a good maid of all work who could cook, besides Hannah; and then there are rent and taxes, and hundreds of things that you never calculate upon. You could not live, my dear, even in a cottage with two maids, on five hundred a year.'

'I think I had better not live at all!' cried Katherine, 'if that is how it is; and yet there must be a great many people who manage very well on less than I have. Why, there are families who live on a pound a week!'

'But not, my dear, with a lady's maid and another,' Miss Mildmay said.

Katherine was very glad when her friends went away. They would either of them have received her into their own little houses with delight, for a long visit—even with her maid, who, as everybody knows, upsets a little house much more than the mistress. She might have sat for a month at a time in either of the drawing-rooms under the green verandah, and looked out upon the terrace gardens with the sea beyond, and thus have been spared so much expense, a consideration which would have been fully in the minds of her entertainers; but their conversation gave her an entirely new view of the subject. Her little income had seemed to her to mean plenty, even luxury. She had thought of travelling. She had thought (with a little bitterness, yet amusement) of the cottage she would build, a dainty little nest full of pretty things. It had never occurred to her that she would not have money enough for all that, or that poor old Hannah, if she accompanied her mistress, would have to descend from the pleasant leisure to which she was accustomed. This new idea was not a pleasant one. She tried to cast it away and to think that she would not care, but the suggestion that even such a thing as the little drawing-room, shadowed by the verandah, was above her reach gave her undeniably a shock. It was not a pretty room; in the winter it was dark and damp, the shabby carpet on a level with the leaf-strewn



flags of the verandah and the flower borders beyond. She had thought with compassion of the inhabitants trying to be cheerful on a dull wintry day in the corner between the window and the fire. And yet that was too fine—too expensive for her now. Mrs. Shanks had two maids and a boy! and could have the Midge when she liked in partnership with her friend. These glories could not be for Katherine. Then she burst into a laugh of ridicule at herself. Other women of her years in all the villages about were working cheerfully for their husbands and babies, washing the clothes and cooking the meals, busy and happy all day long. Katherine could have done that, she felt—but she did not know how she was to vegetate cheerfully upon her five hundred a year. To be sure, as the reader will perceive, who may here be indignant with Katherine, she knew nothing about it, and was not so grateful as she ought to be for what she had in comparison with what she had not.

Lady Jane came to see her the same day, and Lady Jane was over-awed altogether by the news. She had a scared look in her face. 'I can only hope that Stella will show herself worthy of our confidence and put things right between you at once,' she said; but her face did not express the confidence which she put into words. She asked all about the arrival, and about Katherine's purpose of meeting her sister at Gravesend. 'Shall you bring them all down here?' she said.

'It will depend upon Stella. I should like to bring them all here. I have had our old rooms prepared for the nurseries; and there are fires everywhere to air the house. They will feel the cold very much, I suppose. But if the fine weather lasts——. There is only one thing against it, Stella may not care to come.'

'Oh, Stella will come,' said Lady Jane, 'the island is the right place, don't you know, to have a house in, and everybody she used to know will see her here in her glory—and then her husband will be able to run up to town—and begin to squander the money away. Charlie Somers is my own relation, Katherine, but I don't put much faith in him. I wish it had been as we anticipated, and everything had been in your hands.'

'You know what I should have done at once, Lady Jane, if it had——'

'I know—not this, however, anyhow. I hope you would have had sense enough to keep your share. It would have been far better in the long run for Stella, she would always have had you to fall back upon. My heart is broken about it all, Katherine,



I blame myself now more than at the first. I should never have countenanced them ; and I never should if I had thought it would bring disaster upon you.'

'You need not blame yourself, Lady Jane, for this was the will of '71 ; and if you had never interfered at all, if there had been no Charles Somers, and no elopement, it would have been just the same.'

'There is something in that,' Lady Jane said. 'And now I hope, I do hope, that Stella—she is not like you, my dear Katherine. She has never been brought up to think of any one but herself.'

'She has been brought up exactly as I was,' Katherine said with a smile.

'Ah yes, but it is different, quite different ; the foolish wicked preference which was shown for her did good to you—you are a different creature, and most likely it is more or less owing to that. Katherine, you know there are things in which I think you were wrong. When that good, kind man wanted to marry you, as indeed he does now——'

'Not very much, I think, Lady Jane ; which is all the better, as I do not wish at all to marry him.'

'I think you are making a mistake,' said Lady Jane. 'He is not so ornamental perhaps as Charlie Somers, but he is a far better man. Well, then, I suppose there is nothing more to be said ; but I can't help thinking that if you had a man to stand by you they would never have propounded that will.'

'Indeed,' said Katherine, 'you must not think they had anything to do with it ; the will was propounded because it was the only one that was there.'

'I know that women always are imposed upon in business, where it is possible to do it,' Lady Jane said in tones of conviction. And it was with great reluctance that she went away, still with a feeling that it was somehow Katherine's fault, if not at bottom her own, for having secretly encouraged Stella's runaway match. 'She had never thought of this,' she declared, for a moment. 'She had been strongly desirous that Stella should have her share, and she knew that Katherine would have given her her share. As for Stella's actions, no one could answer for them. She might have a generous impulse or she might not ; and Charlie Somers, he was always agape for money. If he had the Duke of Westminster's revenues he would still open his mouth for more. But you may be sure I shall put their duty very plainly before them,' she said.

'Oh, don't, please don't,' cried Katherine. 'I do not want to have anything from Stella's pity—I am not to be pitied at all. I have a very sufficient income of my own.'

'A very sufficient income—for Mr. Tredgold's daughter!' cried Lady Jane, and she hurried away biting her lips to prevent a string of evil names as long as her arm bursting from them. The old wretch! the old brute! the old curmudgeon! were a few of the things she would have liked to say. But it does not do to scatter such expressions about a man's house before he has been buried a week. These are decorums which are essential to the very preservation of life.

Then Katherine's mind turned to the other side of the question, and she thought of herself as Stella's pensioner, of living on sufferance in Stella's house, with a portion of Stella's money subtracted from the rest for her benefit. It would have been just the same had it been she who had endowed Stella, as she had intended, and given her the house and the half of the fortune. The same, and yet how different! Stella would have taken everything her sister had given, and waited and craved for more. But to Katherine it seemed impossible that she should take anything from Stella. It would be charity, alms, a hundred ugly things; it would have been mere and simple justice, as she would have felt it had the doing of it been in her own hands.

But it was not with any of these feelings, it was with the happiness of real affection in seeing her sister again, and the excitement of a great novelty and change and of a new chapter of life quite different from all that she had known before, and probably better, more happy, more comforting than any of her anticipations, that she set out next day to meet Stella and to bring her home.

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#### CHAPTER XXXIX.

A RIVER-SEA between two widely separated banks, so calm that it was like a sea of oil bulging towards the centre from over-fullness; a big ship upon an even keel, moving along with almost imperceptible progress, the distant hazy banks gliding slowly past; the ease and relief of a long voyage over, not only on every face, but on every line of cordage; a bustle of happy people rushing up upon deck to see how near home they were, and of other people

below crowding, bustling over portmanteaux to be packed, and all the paraphernalia of the voyage to be put away. It was a very curious scene to Katherine's eyes, not to speak of the swarming dark figures everywhere—the Lascars, who were the crew, the gliding ayahs in their white wrappings. She was led to the cabin in which Stella, half-dressed, was standing in the midst of piles of clothes and other belongings, all thrown about in a confusion which it seemed impossible ever to reduce to order, with a box or two open and ready to receive the mass which never could be got in. She was so busy that she could not at first be got to understand that somebody from shore had come for her. And even then, though she gave a little cry and made a little plunge at Katherine, it was in the midst of a torrent of directions, addressed sometimes in English, sometimes in Hindostanee, to an English maid and a Hindoo woman who encumbered the small cabin with their presence. A pink-and-white—yet more white than pink—baby lay sprawling, half out of its garments, upon the red velvet steamboat couch. Katherine stood confused, disappointed, longing to take her sister to her heart, and longing to snatch up the little creature who was so new and so strange an element, yet suddenly caught, stopped, set down, in the exaltation of her love and eagerness by the deadly commonplace of the scene. Stella cried, with almost a shriek:

'You, Katherine! Is it possible?' and gave her a hurried kiss; and then, without drawing breath, called out to the women: 'For goodness' sake take care what you're doing. That's my best lace. And put all the muslins at the bottom—I sha'n't want them here,' with a torrent of other directions in a strange tongue to the white-robed ayah in the background. Then—'Only wait,' Stella cried, 'till I get a dress on. But there is never anything ready when I want it. Give me that gown—any gown—and look sharp, can't you? I am never ready till half an hour after everybody. I never can get a thing to put on.'

'Don't mind for to-day, Stella; anything will do for to-day. I have so much to tell you.'

'Oh!' said Stella, looking at her again, 'I see. Your crape's enough, Kate, without a word. So it's all over? Well, perhaps it is for the best. It would have made me miserable if he had refused to see me. And Charlie would have insisted—and—Poor papa! so he's gone—really gone. Give me a handkerchief, quick! I was, of course, partly prepared. It's not such a shock as it might have been.' A tear fell from Stella's eyes upon the

dress which her maid was arranging. She wiped it off carefully, and then her eyes. 'You see how careful I have to be now-a-days,' she said; 'I can't have my dress spotted, I haven't too many of them *now*. Poor papa! Well, it is a good thing it has happened when I have all the distractions of the journey to take off my mind. Have you done now fumbling? Pin my veil properly. Now I'll go on deck with you, Katherine, and we'll watch the ship getting in, and have our talk.'

'Mayn't I kiss the baby first?' Katherine said. She had been looking at that new and wonderful thing over the chaos of the baggage, unable to get further than the cabin door.

'Oh, you'll see the baby after. Already you're beginning to think of the baby and not of me. I knew that was how it would be,' said Stella, pettishly. She stepped over an open box, dragging down a pile of muslins as she moved. 'There's no room to turn round here. Thank Heaven we've done with it at last. Now, Kate—Kate, tell me; it will be the first thing Charlie will want to know. Did he relent to me at the last?'

'There is so much to tell you, Stella.'

'Yes—yes—about his illness and all. Poor papa! I am sure I am just as sorry as if I knew all about it already. But Kate, dear, just one word. Am I cut off in the will? That is what I want to know.'

'No,' said Katherine, 'you are not cut off in the will.'

'Hurrah!' cried Stella, clapping her hands. It was but for one second, and then she quieted down. 'Oh, we have had such a time,' she cried, 'and Charlie always insinuating, when he didn't say it outright, that it was my fault, for, of course, we never, never believed, neither he nor I, that papa would have held out. And so he did come to at the end? Well, it is very hard, very hard to have been kept out of it so long; but I am glad we are to have what belongs to us now. Oh—h!' cried Stella, drawing a long breath as she emerged on deck, leading the way, 'here's the old Thames again, bless it, and the fat banks; and we're at home, and have come into our money. Hurrah!'

'What are you so pleased about, Lady Somers? The first sight of ugly old England and her grey skies,' said someone who met them. The encounter sobered Stella, who paused a moment with a glance from her own coloured dress to Katherine's crape, and a sudden sense of the necessities of the position.

'They aren't very much to be pleased about, are they?' she said. 'Will you find Charlie for me, please. Tell him my sister

has come to meet us, and that there's news which he will like to hear.'

'Stella,' cried Katherine, 'there may not be much sorrow in your heart, yet I don't think you should describe your own father's death as something your husband will like to hear.'

'It is not papa's death, bless you,' cried Stella, lightly. 'Oh, look, they are getting out the ropes. We shall soon be there now—it is the money, to be sure. You have never been hard up for money, Kate, or you would know what it was. Look, there's Charlie on the bridge with little Job; we call him Job because he's always been such a peepy-weepy little fellow, always crying and cross for nothing at all; they say it was because I was in such a temper and misery when he was coming, about having no money, and papa's cruelty. Charlie! That silly man has never found him, though he might have known he was on the bridge. Cha—arlie!' Stella made a tube of her two hands and shouted, and Katherine saw a tall man on the bridge over their heads turn and look down. He did not move, however, for some minutes till Stella's gestures seemed to have awakened his curiosity. He came down then, very slowly, leading with much care an extremely small child, so small that it was curious to see him on his legs at all, who clung to his hand, and whom he lifted down the steep ladder stairs.

'Well,' he said, 'what's the matter now?' when he came within speaking distance. Katherine had scarcely known her sister's husband in the days of his courtship. She had not seen him more than three or four times, and his image had not remained in her mind. She saw now a tall man a little the worse for wear, with a drooping moustache, and lips which drooped, too, at the corners under the moustache, with a look which was slightly morose—the air of a discontented, perhaps disappointed, man. His clothes were slightly shabby, perhaps because they were old clothes worn for the voyage, his hair and moustache had that rusty dryness which comes to hair which does not grow grey, and which gives a shabby air, also as of old clothes, to those natural appendages. The only attractive point about him was the child, the very, very small child which seemed to walk between his feet—so closely did it cling to him, and so very low down.

'Nothing's the matter,' said Stella. 'Here is Kate come to bid us welcome home.'

'O—oh,' he said, and lifted his limp hat by the crown; 'it's a long time since we have met; I don't know that I should have

recognised you.' His eyes went from her hat to her feet with a curious inspection of her dress.

'Yes,' said Katherine, 'you are right; it is so. My father is dead.'

A sudden glimmer sprang into his eyes and a redness to his face; it was as if some light had flashed up over them; he gave his wife a keen look. But decorum seemed more present with him than with Stella. He did not put any question. He said mechanically, 'I am sorry,' and stood waiting, giving once more a glance at his wife.

'All Kate has condescended to tell me,' said Stella, 'is that I am not out of the will. That's the great thing, isn't it? How much there's for us she doesn't say, but there's something for us. Tell him, Kate.'

'There is a great deal for you,' Katherine said, quietly, 'and a great deal to say and to tell you; but it is very public and very noisy here.'

The red light glowed up in Somers' face. He lifted instinctively, as it seemed, the little boy at his feet into his arms, as if to control and sober himself. 'We owe this,' he said, 'no doubt to you, Miss Tredgold.'

'You would have owed it to me had it been in my power,' said Katherine, with one little flash of self-assertion, 'but as it happens,' she added hastily, 'you do not owe anything to me. Stella will be as rich as her heart can desire. Oh, can't we go somewhere out of this noise, where I can tell you, Stella? Or, if we cannot, wait please, wait for the explanations. You have it; isn't that enough? And may I not make acquaintance with the children? And oh, Stella, haven't you a word for me?'

Stella turned round lightly and putting her arms round Katherine kissed her on both cheeks. 'You dear old thing!' she said. And then, disengaging herself, 'I hope you ordered me some mourning, Kate. How can I go anywhere in this coloured gown? Not to say that it is quite out of fashion and shabby besides. I suppose I must have crape—not so deep as yours, though, which is like a widow's mourning. But crape is becoming to a fair complexion. Oh, he won't have anything to say to you, don't think it. He is a very cross, bad-tempered, uncomfortable little boy.'

'Job fader's little boy,' said the pale little creature perched upon his father's shoulder and dangling his small thin legs on Somers' breast. He would indeed have nothing to say to



Katherine's overtures. When she put out her arms to him he turned round, and, clasping his arms round his father's head, hid his own behind it. Meanwhile a look of something which looked like vanity—a sort of sublimated self-complacence—stole over Sir Charles' face. He was very fond of the child; also, he was very proud of the fact that the child preferred him to everybody else in the world.

It was with the most tremendous exertion that the party at last was disembarked, the little boy still on his father's shoulder, the baby in the arms of the ayah. The countless packages and boxes, which to the last moment the aggrieved and distracted maid continued to pack with items forgotten, came slowly to light one after another, and were disposed of in the train, or at least on shore. Stella had forgotten everything except the exhilaration of knowing that she had come into her fortune as she made her farewells all round. 'Oh, do you know? We have had great news; we have come into our money,' she told several of her dearest friends. She was in a whirl of excitement, delight, and regrets. 'We have had such a good time, and I'm so sorry to part; you must come and see us,' she said to one after another. Everybody in the ship was Stella's friend. She had not done anything for them, but she had been good-humoured and willing to please, and she was Stella! This was Katherine's involuntary reflection as she stood like a shadow watching the crowd of friends, the goodbyes and hopes of future meeting, the kisses of the ladies and close hand-clasping of the men. Nobody was so popular as Stella. She was Stella, she was born to please; wherever she went, whatever she did, it was always the same. Katherine felt proud of her sister and subdued by her, and a little amused at the same time. Stella—with her husband by her side, the pale baby crowing in its dark nurse's arms, and the little boy clinging round his father, the worried English maid, the serene white-robed ayah, the soldier-servant curt and wooden, expressing no feeling, and the heaps of indiscriminate baggage which formed a sort of entrenchment round her—was a far more important personage than Katherine could ever be. Stella did not require the wealth which was now to be poured down at her feet to make her of consequence. Without it, in her present poverty, was she not the admired of all beholders—the centre of a world of her own? Her sister looked on with a smile, with a certain admiration, half pleased with the impartiality (after all) of the world, half jarred by the partiality of nature. Her present



want of wealth did not discredit Stella, but Nature somehow discredited Katherine and put her aside, whatever her qualities might be. She looked on without any active feeling in these shades of sentiment, neutral tinted, like the sky and the oily river, and the greyness of the air, with a thread of interest and amusement running through, as if she were looking on at the progress of a story—a story in which the actors interested her, but in which there was no close concern of her own.

‘Kate!’ she heard Stella call suddenly, her voice ringing out (she had never had a low voice) over the noise and bustle. ‘Kate, I forgot to tell you, here’s an old friend of yours. There he is, there he is, Mr. — Go and speak to him for yourself.’

Katherine did not hear the name, and had not an idea who the old friend was. She turned round with a faint smile on her face.

Well! There was nothing wonderful in the fact that he had come home with them. He had, it turned out afterwards, taken his passage in the *Aurungzebe* without knowing that the Somers were going by it, or anything about them. It would be vain to deny that Katherine was startled, but she did not cling to anything for support, nor—except by a sudden change of colour, for which she was extremely angry with herself—betray any emotion. Her heart gave a jump, but then it became quite quiet again. ‘We seem fated to meet in travelling,’ she said, ‘and nowhere else.’ Afterwards she was very angry with herself for these last words. She did not know why she said them—to round off her sentence, perhaps, as a writer often puts in words which he does not precisely mean. They seemed to convey a complaint or a reproach which she did not intend at all.

‘I have been hoping,’ he said, ‘since ever I knew your sister was on board that perhaps you might come, but——’ He looked at Katherine in her mourning, and then over the crowd to Stella, talking, laughing, full of spirit and movement. ‘I was going to say that I—feared some sorrow had come your way, but when I look at Lady Somers——’

‘It is that she does not realise it,’ said Katherine. ‘It is true—my father is dead.’

He stood looking at her again, his countenance changing from red to brown (which was now its natural colour). He seemed to have a hundred things to say, but nothing would come to his lips. At last he stammered forth, with a little difficulty it appeared, ‘I am—sorry—that anything could happen to bring sorrow to you.’

Katherine only answered him with a little bow. He was not

sorry, nor was Stella sorry, nor anyone else involved. She felt with a keen compunction that to make up for this universal satisfaction over her father's death she ought to be sorry—more sorry than words could say.

‘It makes a great difference in my life,’ she said simply, and while he was still apparently struggling for something to say, the Somers party got into motion and came towards the gangway, by which most of the passengers had now landed. The little army pushed forward, various porters first with numberless small packets and bags, then the man and worried maid with more, then the ayah with the baby, then Lady Somers, who caught Katherine by the arm and pushed through with her, putting her sister in front, with the tall figure of the husband and the little boy seated on his shoulders bringing up the rear. Job's little dangling legs were on a level with Stamford's shoulder, and kicked him with a friendly farewell as they passed, while Job's father stretched out a large hand and said, ‘Goodbye, old fellow; we're going to the old place in the Isle of Wight. Look us up some time.’ Katherine heard these words as she landed, with Stella's hand holding fast to her arm. She was amused, too, faintly to hear her sister's husband's instant adoption of the old place in the Isle of Wight. Sir Charles did not as yet know any more than that Stella was not cut off, that a great deal was coming to her. Stella had not required any further information. She had managed to say to him that of course to go to the Cliff would be the best thing, now that it was Katherine's. It would be a handy headquarters and save money, and not be too far from town.

The party was not fatigued as from an inland journey. They had all bathed and breakfasted in such comfort as a steamship affords, so that there was no need for any delay in proceeding to their journey's end. And the bustle and the confusion, and the orders to the servants, and the arrangements about the luggage, and the whining of Job on his father's shoulder, and the screams of the baby when it was for a moment moved from its nurse's arms, and the sharp remarks of Sir Charles and the continual talk of Stella—so occupied every moment that Katherine found herself at home again with this large and exigent party before another word on the important subject which was growing larger and larger in her mind could be said.

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## CHAPTER XL.

THE evening passed in a whirl, such as Katherine, altogether unused to the strange mingled life of family occupations and self-indulgence, could not understand. There was not a tranquil moment for the talk and the explanations. Stella ran from room to room, approving and objecting. She liked the state apartment with its smart furniture in which she had herself been placed, but she did not like the choice of the rooms for the babies, and had them transferred to others, and the furniture altered and pulled about to suit their needs. The house had put on a gala air for the new guests; there were fires blazing everywhere, flowers everywhere, such as could be got at that advanced season. Stella sent the chrysanthemums away, which were the chief point in the decorations. 'They have such a horrid smell. They make my head ache—they remind me,' she said, 'of everything that's dreadful.' And she stood over the worried maid while she opened the boxes, dragging out the dresses by a corner and flinging them about on the floors. 'I shall not want any of those old things. Isn't there a rag of a black that I can wear now? Kate, you were dreadfully remiss not to order me some things. How can I go downstairs and show myself in all my blues and greens? Oh, yes, of course I require to be fitted on, but I'd rather have an ill-fitting gown than none at all. I could wear one of yours, it is true, but my figure is different from yours. I'm not all one straight line from head to foot, as you are; and you're covered over with crape, which is quite unnecessary—nobody thinks of such a thing now. I'll wear *that*,' she added, giving a little kick to a white dress, which was one of those she had dragged out by a flounce and flung on the floor. 'You can put some black ribbons to it, Pearson. Oh, how glad I shall be to get rid of all those old things, and get something fit to wear, even if it's black. I shall telegraph at once to London to send someone down about my things to-morrow, but I warn you I'm not going to wear mourning for a whole year, Kate. No one thinks of such a thing now.'

'You always look well in black, my lady, with your complexion,' said Pearson, the maid.

'Well, perhaps I do,' said Stella mollified. 'Please run down and send off the telegram, Kate; there is such a crowd of things to do.'

And thus the day went on. At dinner there was perforce a little time during which the trio were together; but then the servants were present, making any intimate conversation impossible, and the talk that was was entirely about the dishes, which did not please either Sir Charles or his wife. Poor Mrs. Simmons, anxious to please, had with great care compounded what she called and thought to be a curry, upon which both of them looked with disgust. 'Take it away,' they both said, after a contemptuous examination of the dish, turning over its contents with the end of a fork, one after the other. 'Kate, why do you let that woman try things she knows nothing about?' said Stella severely. 'But you never care what you eat, and you think that's fine, I know. Old Simmons never could do much but what English people call roast and boil—what any savage could do! and you've kept her on all these years! I suppose you have eaten meekly whatever she chose to set before you ever since I went away.'

'I think,' said Sir Charles in his moustache, 'if I am to be here much there will certainly have to be a change in the cook.'

'You can do what you please, Stella—as soon as everything is settled,' Katherine said. Her sister had taken her place without any question at the head of the table; and Somers, perhaps unconsciously, had placed himself opposite. Katherine had taken with some surprise and a momentary hesitation a seat at the side, as if she were their guest—which indeed she was, she said to herself. But she had never occupied that place before; even in the time of Stella's undoubted ascendancy, Katherine had always sat at the head of the table. She felt this as one feels the minor pricks of one's great troubles. After dinner, when she had calculated upon having time for her explanation, Sir Charles took out his cigar case before the servants had left the room. Stella interrupted him with a little scream. 'Oh, Charles, Kate isn't used to smoke! She will be thinking of her curtains and all sorts of things.'

'If Kate objects, of course,' he said, cutting the end off his cigar and looking up from the operation.

Katherine objected, as many women do, not to the cigar but to the disrespect. She said, 'Stella is mistress. I take no authority upon me,' with as easy an air as she could assume.

'Come along and see the children,' Stella cried, jumping up, 'you'll like that, or else you'll pretend to like it,' she said as

they went out of the room together, 'to please me. Now, you needn't trouble to please me in that way. I'm not silly about the children. There they are, and one has to make the best of them, but it's rather hard to have the boy a teeny weeny thing like Job. The girl's strong enough, but it don't matter so much for a girl. And Charlie is an idiot about Job. Ten to one he will be upstairs as soon as we are, snatching the little wretch out of his bed and carrying him off. They sit and croon for hours together when there's no one else to amuse Charlie. And I'm sure I don't know what is to become of him, for there will be nobody to amuse him here.'

'But it must be so bad for the child, Stella. How can he be well if you allow that to go on?'

'Oh,' cried Stella, clapping her hands, 'I knew you would be the very model of a maiden aunt! Now you've found your real rôle in life, Kate. But don't go crossing the ayah, for she won't understand you, and you'll come to dreadful grief. Oh, the children! We should only disturb them if we went in. I said that for an excuse to get you away. Come into my room, and let's look over my clothes. I am sure I have a black gown somewhere. There was a royal mourning, don't you know, and I had to get one in a hurry to go to Government House in—unless Pearson has taken it for herself. Black is becoming to my complexion, I know—but I don't like it all the same—it shows every mark, and it's hot, and if you wear crape it should always be quite fresh. This of yours is crumpled a little. You'll look like an old woman from the workhouse directly if you wear crumpled crape—it is the most expensive, the most——'

'You need not mind that now, Stella; and for papa's sake——'

'Good gracious! what a thing that is to say! I need never mind it! Charlie will say I should always mind it. He says no income could stand me. Are you there, Pearson? Well, it is just as well she isn't; we can look them over at our ease without her greedy eyes watching what she is to have. She'll have to get them all, I suppose, for they will be old-fashioned before I could put them on again. Look here!' cried Stella, opening the great wardrobe and pulling down in the most careless way the things which the maid had placed there. She flung them on the floor as before, one above the other. 'This is one I invented myself,' she said. 'Don't you think that grey with the silver is good? It had a great succès. They say it looked like moonlight. By the bye,' she added, 'that might come in again. Grey with

silver is mourning! What a good thing I thought of that! It must have been an inspiration. I've only worn it once, and it's so fantastic it's independent of the fashion. It will come in quite well again.'

'Stella, I do wish you would let me tell you how things are, and how it all happened, and——'

'Yes, yes,' cried Lady Somers, 'another time! Here's one, again, that I've only worn once; but that will be of no use, for it's pink—unless we could make out somehow that it was mauve, there is very little difference—a sort of blue shade cast upon it, which might be done by a little draping, and it would make such a pretty mauve. There is very little difference between the two, only mauve is mourning and pink is—frivolity, don't you know. Oh, Pearson, here you are! I suppose you have been down at your supper? What you can do to keep you so long at your supper I never can tell. I suppose you flirt with all the gentlemen in the servants' hall. Look here, don't you think this pink, which I have only worn once, could be made with a little trouble to look mauve? I am sure it does already a little by this light.'

'It is a very bright rose-pink, my lady,' said Pearson, not at all disposed to see one of the freshest of her mistress's dresses taken out of her hands.

'You say that because you think you will get it for yourself,' said Lady Somers, 'but I am certain with a little blue carefully arranged to throw a shade it would make a beautiful mauve.'

'Blue-and-pink are the Watteau mixture,' said Pearson, holding her ground, 'which is always considered the brightest thing you can wear.'

'Oh, if you are obstinate about it!' cried the mistress. 'But recollect I am not at your mercy here, Pearson, and I shall refer it to Louise. Kate, I'm dreadfully tired; I think I'll go to bed. Remember I haven't been on solid ground for ever so long. I feel the motion of the boat as if I were going up and down. You do go on feeling it, I believe, for weeks after. Take off this tight dress, Pearson, quick, and let me get to bed.'

'Shall I sit by you a little after, and tell you, Stella?'

'Oh goodness, no! Tell me about a death and all that happened, in the very same house where it was, to make me nervous and take away my rest! You quite forget that I am delicate, Kate! I never could bear the things that you, a great, robust, middle-aged woman, that have never had any drain on your strength, can



go through. Do let me have a quiet night, my first night after a sea voyage. Go and talk to Charlie, if you like, he has got no nerves; and Pearson, put the lemonade by my bed, and turn down the light.'

Katherine left her sister's room with the most curious sensations. She was foiled at every point by Stella's lightness, by her self-occupation, the rapidity of her loose and shallow thoughts, and their devotion to one subject. She recognised in a half-angry way the potency and influence of this self-occupation. It was so sincere that it was almost interesting. Stella found her own concerns full of interest; she had no amiable delusions about them. She spoke out quite simply what she felt, even about her children. She did not claim anything except boundless indulgence for herself. And then it struck Katherine very strangely, it must be allowed, to hear herself described as a great robust middle-aged woman. Was that how Stella saw her—was she *that*, probably, to other people? She laughed a little to herself, but it was not a happy laugh. How misguided was the poet when he prayed that we might see ourselves as others see us! Would not that be a dreadful coming down to almost everybody, even to the fairest and the wisest? The words kept fitting through Katherine's mind without any will of hers. 'A great, robust, middle-aged woman.' She passed a long mirror in the corridor (there were mirrors everywhere in Mr. Tredgold's much decorated house), and started a little involuntarily to see the slim black figure in it gliding forward as if to meet her. Was this herself, Katherine, or was it the ghost of what she had thought she was, a girl at home, although twenty-nine? After all, middle-age does begin with the thirties, Katherine said to herself. Dante was thirty-five only when he described himself as at the *mezzo del cammin*. Perhaps Stella was right. She was three years younger. As she went towards the stairs occupied by these thoughts, she suddenly saw Sir Charles, a tall shadow, still more ghost-like than herself, in the mirror; with a little white figure seated on his shoulder. It was the little Job, the delicate boy, his little feet held in his father's hand to keep them warm, his arms clinging round his father's head as he sat upon his shoulder. Katherine started when she came upon the group, and made out the little boy's small face and staring eyes up on those heights. Her brother-in-law greeted her with a laugh: 'You wouldn't stop with me to smoke a cigar, so I have found a companion who never objects. You like the smoke, don't you, Job?'



'Job fader's little boy,' said the small creature, in a voice with a shiver in it.

'Put a shawl round him, at least,' cried Katherine, going hastily to a wardrobe in the corridor; 'the poor little man is cold.'

'Not a bit, are you, Job, with your feet in father's hand?'

'Indland,' said the child, with a still more perceptible shiver, 'Indland's cold.'

But he tried to kick at Katherine as she approached to put the shawl round him, which Sir Charles stooped to permit, with an instinct of politeness.

'What, kick at a lady!' cried Sir Charles, giving the child a shake. 'But we are not used to all these punctilios. We shall do very well, I don't fear.'

'It is very bad for the child—indeed, he ought to be asleep,' Katherine could not but say. She felt herself the maiden aunt, as Stella had called her, the robust middle-aged woman—a superannuated care-taking creature who did nothing but interfere.

'Oh, we'll look after that, Job and I,' the father said, going on down the stairs without even the fictitious courtesy of waiting till Katherine should pass. She stood and watched them going towards the drawing-room, the father and child. The devotion between them was a pretty sight—no doubt it was a pretty sight. The group of the mother and child is the one group in the world which calls forth human sentiment everywhere; and yet the father and child is more moving, more pathetic still, to most, certainly to all feminine, eyes. It seems to imply more—a want in the infant life to which its mother is not first, a void in the man's. Is it that they seem to cling to each other for want of better? But that would be derogatory to the father's office. At all events it is so. Katherine's heart melted at this sight. The poor little child uncared for in the midst of so much ease, awake with his big excited eyes when he ought to have been asleep, exposed to the cold to which he was unaccustomed, shivering yet not complaining, his father carrying him away to comfort his own heart—negligent, but not intentionally so, of the child's welfare, holding him as his dearest thing in the world. The ayah, on hearing the sound of voices, came to the door of the room, expostulating largely in her unknown tongue, gesticulating, appealing to the unknown lady. 'He catch death—cold,' she cried, and Katherine shook her head as she stood watching them, the child recovering his spirits in the warmth of the shawl, his little laugh sounding through the house. 'Oh, how bad it was for

little Job! and yet the conjunction was so touching that it went to her heart. She hesitated for a moment. What would be the use of following them, of endeavouring through Sir Charles's cigar and Job's chatter to give his brother-in-law the needful information, joyful though it must be. She did not understand these strange, eager, *insouciant*, money-grasping, yet apparently indifferent people, who were satisfied with her curt intimation of their restoration to wealth, even though they were for ever, as Lady Jane said, agape for more. She stood for a moment hesitating, and then she turned away in the other direction to her own room, and gave it over for the night.

But Katherine's cares were not over; in her room she found Mrs. Simmons waiting for her, handkerchief in hand, with her cap a little awry and her eyes red with crying. 'I'm told, Miss Katherine,' said Simmons with a sniff, 'as Miss Stella, which they calls her ladyship, don't think nothing of my cookin', and says I'm no better than a savage. I've bin in this house nigh upon twenty years, and my things always liked, and me trusted with everything; and that's what I won't take from no one, if it was the Lord Chamberlain himself. I never thought to live to hear myself called a savage—and it's what I can't put up with, Miss Katherine—not to go again you. I wouldn't cross you not for no money. I've 'ad my offers, both for service and for publics, and other things. Mr. Harrison, the butler, he have been very pressin'—but I've said just this, and it's my last word, I won't leave Miss Katherine while she's in trouble. I know my dooty better nor that, I've always said.'

'Thank you, Mrs. Simmons; you were always very good to me,' said Katherine, 'and you must not mind anything that is said at table. You know Stella always was hasty, and never meant half she said.'

'Folks do say, Miss Katherine,' said Simmons, 'as it's a going to be Miss Stella's house.'

'Yes, it will be her house; but whether she will stay in it or not I cannot tell you yet. It would be very nice for you, Simmons, to be left here as housekeeper with a maid or two to attend you, and nothing to do.'

'I hope,' said Simmons, with again a sniff, 'as I am not come so low down as that—to be a caretaker, me at my time of life. And it don't seem to me justice as Miss Stella should have the house as she runned away from and broke poor old master's heart. He's never been himself from that day. I wonder she can show

her face in it, Miss Katherine, that I do ! Going and calling old servants savages, as has been true and faithful and stood by him, and done their best for him up to the very last.'

'You must not be offended, Simmons, by a foolish word ; and you must not speak so of my sister. She is my only sister, and I am glad she should have everything, everything !' Katherine cried with fervour, the moisture rising to her eyes.

'Then, Miss Katherine, it's more nor any one else is, either in the servants' hall or the kitchen. Miss Stella, or her ladyship as they calls her, is a very 'andsome young lady, and I knows it, and dreadful spoiled she has been all her life. But she don't have no consideration for servants. And we'll clear out, leastways I will for one, if she is to be the missus here.'

'I hope you will wait first and see what she intends. I am sure she would be very sorry, Simmons, to lose so good a servant as you.'

'I don't know as it will grieve her much—me as she has called no better nor a savage ; but she'll have to stand it all the same. And the most of the others, I warn you, Miss Katherine, will go with me.'

'Don't, dear Simmons,' said Katherine. 'Poor Stella has been nearly seven long years away, and she has been among black people, where—where people are not particular what they say ; don't plunge her into trouble with her house the moment she gets back.'

'She ought to have thought of that,' cried Simmons, 'afore she called a white woman and a good Christian, I hope, a savage—a savage ! I am not one of them black people ; and I doubt if the black people themselves would put up with it. Miss Katherine, I won't ask you for a character.'

'Oh, Simmons, don't speak of that.'

'No,' said Simmons, dabbing her eyes, then turning to Katherine with an insinuating smile, 'because—because I'll not want one if what I expect comes to pass. Miss Katherine, you haven't got no objections to me.'

'You know I have not, Simmons ! You know I have always looked to you to stand by me and back me up.'

'Your poor old Simmons, Miss Katherine, as made cakes for you, and them apples as you were so fond of when you were small ! And as was always ready, no matter for what, if it was a lunch or if it was a supper, or a picnic, or whatever you wanted, and never a grumble ; if it was ever so unreasonable, Miss Katherine, dear !

If this house is Miss Stella's house, take me with you ! I shouldn't mind a smaller 'ouse. Fifteen is a many to manage, and so long as I've my kitchen-maid I don't hold with no crowds in the kitchen. Take me with you, Miss Katherine—you might be modest about it—seeing as you're not a married lady and no gentleman, and a different style of establishment. But you will want a cook and a housekeeper wherever you go—take me with you, Miss Katherine, dear.'

'Dear Simmons,' said Katherine, 'I have not money enough for that. I shall not be rich now. I shall have to go into lodgings with Hannah—if I can keep Hannah.'

'You are joking,' said Simmons, withdrawing with wonder her handkerchief from her eyes. 'You, Mr. Tredgold's daughter, you the eldest ! Oh, Miss Katherine, say it plain if you won't have me, but don't tell me that.'

'But indeed it is true,' cried Katherine. 'Simmons, you know what things cost better than I do, and Mrs. Shanks says and Miss Mildmay——'

'Oh, Mrs. Shanks and Miss Mildmay ! Them as you used to call the old cats ! Don't you mind, Miss Katherine, what they say.'

'Simmons, tell me,' asked Katherine, 'what can I do, how many servants can I keep, with five hundred a year ?'

Simmons's countenance fell, her mouth opened in her consternation, her jaw dropped. She knew very well the value of money. She gasped as she repeated : 'Five hundred a year !'

(*To be continued.*)

## *D. G. Rossetti and his Family Letters.<sup>1</sup>*

**I**F it be a desideratum that the private circumstances of an artist's life should be known to the public, it must be conceded that Rossetti suffered much.

Up to the day of his death he remained little more than a 'solar myth,' whether as an artist or a personality; and this not only to the 'man in the street,' but to many cultured men and women who had entered into the house of his poetry.

The fame of his pictures was noised abroad, but they themselves were hidden in private galleries. With this his influence on the æsthetic ideals of the country was widely felt, though the spring itself was hidden.

'. . . England—land that knew thee not—  
Or knew thee but as one who in his sleep  
Feels the sheets' smoothing 'neath an unknown hand,  
And feels sweet sympathy; yet knows not whose.'

On the other hand, his poems were widely read, but they gave singularly little insight into their author's personality.

The prevailing impression was, and perhaps to some extent remains, that Rossetti was a man of exaggerated sentimentality, moving in an atmosphere of colours from among which the primaries were carefully excluded; u.s.w. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth.

The most prominent biographic light was thrown by the pamphlet of Mr. 'Thomas Maitland,' but this nebula was perhaps more conspicuous in the Rossettian firmament than in that visible to the world of art and letters in general.

After his death a number of more or less clear-sighted works,

<sup>1</sup> *D. G. Rossetti, Letters and a Memoir*, by W. M. Rossetti. Ellis & Elvey.  
VOL. XXVII. NO. CLXI.

having him for their subject, made their appearance in one form or another. They have, indeed, continued to do so to this day.

It suffices to mention in the order of their appearance: Mr. Sharp's rather unreadable work; Mr. Hall Caine's *Recollections*; Mr. Knight's excellent memoir, and Mr. Watts' article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*; as well as Mr. Stephen's 'Portfolio' devoted to Rossetti's works.

Besides these, there have been Mr. Esther Wood's excellently intentioned but rather too ecstatic book, and the late W. B. Scott's autobiography, with its quantum of Mephistophelean passages anent Rossetti.

It is, however, to be doubted whether a study of all these works, or of the three best, Messrs. Knight's, Stephen's, and Watts's, taken in conjunction with Mr. Caine's reminiscences of Rossetti's later days, would do more than reveal, as in a glass, darkly, the sunny personality of the poet artist.

For various reasons, what, to use the cant term, we may call the 'official' biography has remained unwritten for nearly a decade and a half. That the delay has proved auspicious one must needs think.

During the interval Rossetti's fame has steadily grown, and as years have passed, the movements for which, and the men with whom, he worked have seemed to gain added relative importance on their respective stages. Therefore, of necessity, the knowledge of the excellence of the man's works must outweigh in our minds the thoughts of his failings now that he himself stands revealed by the almost too dispassionate hand of his brother.

To turn, then, to the letters themselves. It is to be doubted if closer or more cordial feelings ever bound family together than those which prompted the writing of those from D. G. Rossetti now before us. His love for his mother was singularly touching.

'My dearest Mother,' he writes on May 12, 1868, 'the reminder of the solemn fact that I am now a man of forty could hardly come agreeably from anyone but yourself. But, considering that the chief blessing of my forty good and bad years has been that not one of them has taken you from me, it is the best of all things to have the same dear love and good wishes still coming to me to-day from your dear hand at a distance as they would have come from your dear mouth had we seen one another.'

Such passages, with loving care bestowed upon the turn of phrase and trend of thought, exemplify throughout the letters addressed to his mother, and this during the days of his most intense

gloom and suffering. A few days before his death, when expecting her visit at Birchington, he sends 'for a chair which is the twin of the one she sits in at home and which is still here.' Such filial love is, of course, a characteristic of the Latin peoples from whom Rossetti drew his blood; but in Rossetti's case it did not, as is so frequently the case in France and Italy, develop itself at the expense of his fraternal or marital affections.

Otherwise the 'Family Letters' are of most interest as revealing the 'growth of a soul,' although, biographically speaking, individual letters are of extreme interest.

The discrimination and certainty of selection displayed by the young Rossetti are striking.

At the opening of the volume he writes, with all the hero-worship of extreme youth, praises of almost forgotten writers and artists—the men of the hour.

Thus we have the future master-worker in that most perilous of all media, the supernatural, thrilled with the now unreadable mysteries of 'Melmoth'-Maturin, or begging his correspondents not to stale by premature revelation the enjoyment to be drawn from the perusal of the *Juif Errant*, or the *Mystères de Paris*. As far as art went, we have him 'gloating over all manner of Gavarnis, Johannots, and Nanteuils.' This at the age of sixteen.

Rossetti himself held, and there is no reason for disputing the point, that his achievements in literature were more satisfactory than in the plastic art—that he came nearer attaining his ideal in the former than in the latter. Perhaps his earlier development in a literary way to some extent accounted for this. At the age of fourteen he wrote his *Sir Hugh the Heron*, an almost hopelessly unpromising imitation of the then dominant *Lays* of Sir Walter Scott. We hear of

The armour which clanked as the warrior rose  
And rattled as he fell,

and of many similar phenomena. In his more carefully written letters of the period—those to his father—we have such 'spirit-of-the-age-inspired' sentences as: 'The labour of composition [*i.e.* writing a letter] in a language in which I am so imperfect is an agony that I would willingly avoid.'

But in an astonishingly short period his selective faculties had sharpened in a remarkable degree. It is curious that, as was the case with Sir Walter Scott, the earliest work of Rossetti that bears consideration was devoted to translating German ballads



—Bürger's *Lenore* and the like. At nearly the same date he gained his admiration for Dante, so that the next development of the young Rossetti would seem to have been a ravenous taste for two poets whose names seem singularly linked with Rossetti's—Blake and Browning. Thus at the age of nineteen he had outstripped the 'spirit of the age.'

This he had done in another path, for he had already produced the *Blessed Damozel*, a poem by which one might well be content to let his reputation stand or fall.

Before he was twenty he had written or begun *Dante at Verona*, *The Bride's Prelude*, and *A Last Confession*. This last poem betrays perhaps more than any other its author's study of the methods of Browning, but it betrays no imitation of a slavish kind. Thus at the age of nineteen we may consider that he attained maturity as a poet.

As a painter his development was much longer deferred. Only when he had nearly reached the age of twenty did he take any step which in any way influenced his career. This was when he placed himself within the influence of Madox Brown. That this step was a momentous one anyone at all conversant with Rossetti's life-story must be sufficiently aware. If Rossetti's predilection for mediæval art was a matter of earlier growth,<sup>1</sup> his attention to the merits of realistic portrayal was certainly owed to the teaching of Madox Brown. Madox Brown was indeed more inclined to insist upon this side of the matter than Rossetti's ardent nature allowed him to relish.

The next step towards the formation of Rossetti as an artist brings us into the sphere of P.R.B.ism—a stage which was, of course, anything but final. At that time his tastes were warped in a quite unnecessary degree, but the failing was one he held in common with the rest of the brethren. It betrayed him into such utterances as: 'Delacroix (except in two pictures which show a kind of savage genius) is a perfect beast, though almost worshipped here.' The same letter, written from Paris when Rossetti was twenty-one, contains other equally obstinate exaggerations, Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* being dismissed as 'one of the most comic performances I ever saw in my life.' These expressions of opinion are, however, little more than the wrong-headed outpourings of a P.R. propagandist.

To pursue further the subject of Rossetti's progress towards maturity as a painter and art critic is a task not here set me.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Holman Hunt has told us that it was—*c.f.* *Contemporary Review*.

I should be inclined to say that Rossetti as a poetic designer never attained a higher level of excellence than in the triptych of *Paolo e Francesca*, the conception of which must be relegated to the year 1849. The best version of the design is that in the collection of the late Mr. Leathart. It was painted nearly twenty years later, at the time when Rossetti was painting his most beautiful women's heads. Allowing him, therefore, to have attained his full power of poetic design by the time he was twenty-one, we must consider him as adding to his technical acquirements with greater or less rapidity according to the relative values one assigns to the pictures, let us say, of *Beata Beatrix* or the *Astarte Syriaca*.

It is, of course, only in their revelations of Rossetti's mental attitude towards his art that Rossetti's letters to his family are valuable as indicants of this side of his life. In Mr. William Rossetti's very complete 'Memoir' which precedes the Letters themselves, we meet with one reason for the fewness of pictures with subjects that Rossetti executed. It was the very simple one that his patrons preferred to have him use his talents in the portrayal of surpassingly beautiful women. And so considerable was the demand for this species of design that, in his later years, Rossetti several times wrote to Madox Brown complaining of the labour of assigning descriptive names to a large number of heads.

For the rest it is singular how lovable a man Rossetti appears in his letters here published, and it is not more than fair to say that, in his correspondence with Madox Brown, which I have had occasion to study rather minutely, it is difficult to discover anything calculated to make an ordinary reader seriously dislike him. Of the two men who have attacked his person, the one, 'Thomas Maitland,' has recanted, and the other, the late W. B. Scott, has so liberally negatived the virtues of everybody with whom he came in contact that his Mephistophelean gibes would pass for little in any case. Mr. W. Rossetti has, however, so amply confuted most of his allegations that their negative value is increased in a considerable degree.

On the other hand, there is no possibility of denying that Rossetti had failings—or let us say one central failing—that obscured his later days and made him keep suspiciously aloof from nearly all his friends, besides rendering miserable everyone interested in him. This would, of course, be rather a personal than a public matter were it not for the fact that Rossetti's working powers were terribly crippled by this chloral habit.

In his Memoir Mr. W. Rossetti has treated the subject minutely

—one feels tempted to say too minutely—and with absolute candour. One of the chapters in the latter half of the book must, I think, be called one of the most painful in modern biography, but it is one which brings out very fully the fact that Rossetti's insomnia, use of chloral, and the incalculable consequent loss to the world of art, were almost entirely due to the reckless asseverations of the 'Fleshly School' pamphlet.

On the other hand, there is this to be said for Rossetti's indulgence in chloral. At the time when sleeplessness first attacked him chloral was introduced into the circle as an absolutely innocuous remedy, and Rossetti had habituated himself to its use before its ill effects were disclosed. At the last—and for some time before the last—the habit was carried to such an extent that, as Rossetti himself put it, it became a commercial necessity—that is to say, want of chloral meant insomnia, and want of sleep powerlessness to work.

Various people made attempts to wean him of the habit, but achieved little in that direction. Madox Brown himself claimed to have reduced the quantity taken to a minimum. This he brought about partly by reasoning, partly by 'bullying,' and partly by clandestine adulteration, thus uniting the methods of other workers in the same cause. This was at Herne Bay and its neighbourhood.

The only nearly final result would seem to have been that Rossetti refused to see Madox Brown unless he refrained from troubling about the chloral question, and in the mean time 'relapsed.' It was on this occasion that he wrote the letter conveying the very reasonable views that I have repeated above. It is, indeed, pitched in as reasonable a key as possible, showing no trace of the morbid suspicions to which the use of the chloral rendered him susceptible.

To turn to kindlier things.

Few pleasanter pictures of a man's early family life are to be found than that presented to us in the earlier pages of the Memoir. We observe in it all the elements of gentleness and joyousness that are to be found in the records of the Mendelssohn family. Scholarly elders, brilliant and talented children, the family cliquish associations and pursuits, are as present in the one as in the other, and are very similar in feature up to a certain point.

In Mendelssohn's case, the surroundings were those of a wealthy semi-Jewish German family. Rossetti's were those of an Italian colony in a foreign but not uncongenial land.

Rossetti's father was a man proscribed by the Naples Bourbons, and doomed to pass his life in a country where he 'bought his climate at the coal merchant's,' as he quaintly phrased it. But he did not repine, and he made his home a centre of the colony of Italian patriots then in London, making welcome any kind of compatriot, from men like Mazzini to the poorest of plaster-cast sellers. In his native land he was, and still is, revered as a poet of the Young Italy of his own day. In England he made his living by giving Italian lessons. He was, besides, a very learned student of Dante's works, with a 'theory' of his own; and, as was only natural, the children regarded the great Florentine as a bugbear.

Otherwise he was a man quite lacking in self-consciousness, though with no want of self-opinion, capable of warm attachments and of equally warm hatreds.

When told of the death of his benefactor and friend Hookham Frere, 'with tears in his half-sightless eyes and the passionate fervour of a southern Italian, my father fell on his knees and exclaimed: "Anima bella, benedetta sii tu, dovunque sei."'

Here we have a picture of him in his more tranquil moments: 'In all my earlier years I used frequently to see my father come home in the dusk, rather fagged with his round of teaching, and, after dining, he would lie down flat on the hearthrug close by the fire, and fall asleep for an hour or two, snoring vigorously. Beside him would stand up our old tabby cat, poised on her haunches and holding on by the fore-claws inserted into the fender wires, warming her furry front. Her attitude (I have never seen any feline imitation of it) was peculiar—somewhat in the shape of a capital Y. "The cat making the Y" was my father's phrase for this performance. She was the mother of a numerous progeny; one of her daughters—also long an inmate of our house—was a black and white cat, named Zoe by my elder sister Maria, who had a fancy for anything Greekish; but Zoe never made a Y.'

Of English blood there was very little in Rossetti—what little there was being derived from a maternal great-grandfather, who was born in 1736, and from similar rather distant sources. His maternal grandfather was a friend of Count Alfieri, and was present at the taking of the Bastille. During that day he had a sword thrust into his hand with the admonition: '*Prenez, citoyen, combattez pour la patrie.*' Polidori, of course, was inclined for no such thing, and, after a moment's reflection, 'I stuck it into

the hand of the first unarmed person I met, and repeating, "*Prenez, citoyen, combattez pour la patrie,*" I passed on and returned home.'

His son, Polidori, Rossetti's maternal uncle, was the same who accompanied Byron upon one of his voyages, and was the author of the *Vampyre*, a work frequently but erroneously ascribed to Byron himself.

Rossetti thus received poetic traditions from both sides of his family. His first artistic impulses were derived from the study of theatrical scenes of the kind then called familiarly the 'penny plain, twopence coloured,' published by Skelt.

At the age of five or thereabouts he began to illustrate scenes from Shakespeare, but his drawings had no merit of any kind. Nevertheless, from that time forward he seldom had a pencil or brush out of his hand, and in the family it was generally understood that 'Gabriel meant to be a painter.' His studies he pursued only in the direction that suited him. School he cordially disliked, only seeing the brutal cruelty of such sports as fisticuffs, and the unprofitability of other boyish pursuits.

The Academy schools he abandoned for Madox Brown's tuition, Madox Brown's for Mr. Holman Hunt's, and finally, gravitating along the line of least resistance, he found his *métier* in the very class of work which came easiest to him.

His personal fascination was great, his physical attractiveness great, his eloquence extreme. It has been said that with his musical tongue he kept together for far longer than was natural the incongruous elements of the P.R. Brotherhood.

I have heard it advanced that Rossetti was one of the most selfish of men, and this by an artist who knew him excellently. This may or may not have been the case, and yet his was certainly one of the most splendidly generous of natures. In either case the ruling spirit was an entire want of self-consciousness—of that impulse which leads one to preparatory analysis of one's action.

If he set himself to attain an end, he did his best, and did not stay to consider the feelings of others. If, on the other hand, his sympathies were aroused, he spared neither his pocket nor his interest.

From private but quite trustworthy sources I could instance innumerable cases of Rossetti's charity of a pecuniary kind, and very many in which he gave the highest proof of generosity that an artist can give—that of introducing rivals, and very consider-

able rivals, to his own patrons. I do not, of course, mean to say that this class of action was the special characteristic of Rossetti amongst the Brethren, for it was one of the most pleasing features of the movement; but had Rossetti's nature been ungenerous, he would have proved himself an exception to the rule. That he was not is all the more remarkable when we consider in what a high degree Rossetti's business faculties were developed.

The number of his friends, their warm attachment to him, and their various types, bear witness to his powers of attraction; and if we may believe that one man may influence another, we must hold that Rossetti's influence on his day was great, for among his intimate friends he numbered Ruskin, Millais, Holman Hunt, Burne Jones, George Meredith, William Morris, and Swinburne; among his acquaintance almost every writer of importance of the class lying between Tennyson and Browning, not to mention a whole host of lesser lights such as James Hannay or Dr. Hake. But whatever his influence were, it was an artistic rather than an ethical one, or rather than a scientific one. He was a synthete rather than an analyst. In that direction the line of delimitation was sharply drawn.

On the other hand, his expression of his own philosophy, as we find it in the *Cloud Confines*, was as finite and definite as Coleridge's was infinite and indefinite.

For the rest, a word might be said about the person with whom Rossetti's name is most linked in the popular estimation—Miss Siddal, Mrs. D. G. Rossetti. This is how Mr. William Rossetti describes her:

'Her character was somewhat singular, not quite easy to understand, and not at all on the surface. Often as I have been in her company, I hardly think that I ever heard her say a single thing indicative of her own character or of her serious underlying thought . . . It [her speech] was like the speech of a person who wanted to turn off the conversation and leave matters substantially as they were before. She seemed to say, "My mind and my feelings are my own, and no outsider is expected to pry into them." That she had plenty of mind is a fact abundantly evidenced by her designs and water colours, and by her verses as well.'

Of her person:

'She was a most beautiful creature with an air between dignity and sweetness, mixed with something which exceeded modest self-respect, and partook of disdainful reserve; tall, finely formed, with a lofty neck, and regular yet somewhat uncommon features,

greenish blue, unsparkling eyes, large perfect eyelids, brilliant complexion, and a lavish wealth of coppery golden hair.'

She won the admiration of almost everyone with whom she came in contact, from Mr. Ruskin to Mr. Swinburne, and as the prototype of *Beata Beatrix* figures as one of the standards of poetic beauty that our world knows to-day.

Rossetti's affection for her was very deep and lasting. It is not to be denied that after her death he attempted to console himself with other ladies' charms, but he frequently tried by spiritualists' means to converse with her spirit. He thought secrets might be wrested from the grave when two souls were as intimately connected as were his and that of his dead wife.

'Still we say, as we go,  
Strange to think by the way,  
Whatever there is to know,  
That we shall know one day.'

FORD M. HUEFFER.



## *Love's Conquest.*

**B**EAUTY fair-haired, with soul serene,  
 To which of mortals shall be granted  
 To agitate that tranquil mien,  
 And lead you to a land enchanted?

Those eyes as yet to love are sealed,  
 And shall be till the time appointed,  
 Until Love's magic has revealed  
 The realm where he is king anointed.

Shall Love come in a lightning blaze,  
 And show himself in sudden glory?  
 Ah, no! through slow succeeding days  
 He timidly shall tell his story.

And then at last the veil shall fall,  
 Unconsciously you'll make surrender,  
 Then Love shall reign the lord of all,  
 Even of your heart in all its splendour!

WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK.

## *An Undaunted Spirit.*

**J**OE BUNCE and his wife had kept up a brave struggle at the farm against falling prices and bad seasons. For years it had been a slow descent towards poverty, but they had reached the dismal goal at last, and it was with a sense of dreadful relief the old couple realised that nothing further could be done—that the unequal contest was ended. Joe Bunce had worked hard up to seventy-five years of age, and what good had his labours done him when it no longer paid him to reap the grain he had sown? With wheat at twenty-five shillings a quarter it was impossible to make a living out of the land, and there was no prospect but the workhouse before him and the faithful wife who for fifty years had shared his many cares and few joys. Neighbours, perhaps with more brains and certainly with more capital than Farmer Bunce, asked him, as wheat grew cheaper and he grew poorer, why he didn't give up wheat and take to crops that would pay. But his reply was always the same: 'It's good stiff wheat-land; my father and my grandfather before me made a living out o' the acres I'm losing on now, and I've got to work on till times turn again. It used to be said that the man that made two ears o' corn grow where there'd bin only one before was a benefactor to his country. All I know is nowadays he's a misfortune to himself. But we've no chance wi' foreign wheat comin' into the country free o' duty, flooding the markets and ruining farming. How can we stand agin it? There's summat wrong, neighbour, when a hard-working man's beggared by growing corn. He'd ought not to starve that grows food for others.'

Bunce's landlord was also undergoing the process of being crushed out of existence by decaying agriculture, and had lowered his rents to the full extent his diminished means would allow. But if he had given the farm to his tenant he could not have made it pay with prices where they were. And when Bunce had put the strength and energy of his manhood and his last penny

into the soil he died broken-hearted, and his landlord had the farm empty on his hands. Joe Bunce and his wife jealously concealed their poverty and were too proud to borrow. When they were in sore straits they sold their oak furniture, bit by bit, till there was scarcely anything left in the house. They had parted with the presiding deity among their household gods—the round mirror in the parlour surmounted by a black eagle with outstretched wings, holding a gilded chain and balls in his beak. And later, when want was knocking at the door, they had been driven to sell the silver teapot and stand Joe's father had given to his mother in the fulness of his heart in the good old war time. That was when wheat touched a hundred and twenty shillings the quarter, and farmers thought they had entered on a golden age, and were little disposed to pray—'Give peace in our time, O Lord!'

Mrs. Bunce had a well-to-do brother in Yorkshire, a grazier and stock-breeder. He had advanced his sister money to pay arrears of wages on the farm and to enable her to settle with Joyce, the servant who had worked as hard as her mistress, sharing her scanty fare and dwindling means, till the pressure of poverty compelled them to part. But William Thorpe's last gift had been accompanied by a letter speaking hardly of Bunce in his difficulties, and Margaret's pride was up in arms. She would starve before she asked her brother for another penny.

It was not long before the neighbours had a shrewd suspicion of the real state of affairs at the farm. But the Bunces were difficult folks to help, especially the wife, and many a well-to-do farmer who would willingly have sent them a joint of pork or a couple of fowls was prevented by misgivings as to how the gift would be received. The landlady of the inn in the neighbouring village wished to help them by buying their honey from them, and she offered Mrs. Bunce fourteenpence a pound for all she would let her have. But the old woman was suspicious of the price. 'If you think it's a charity to pay more for it than I should have the face to ask, missis, I don't want the money. But if you can say as you think my honey is worth twopence a pound more i' the market than other folkeses, I don't mind letting you have it at the price.' And the untruth had to be told before the bargain was struck.

No one really knew the privations the old people endured except the doctor who attended Bunce in his last illness and the rector of the parish and his wife. The latter managed from time

to time to leave both soup and wine at the door, saying it had been ordered by the doctor, for otherwise it would not have been accepted. The only gift Margaret was not too proud to receive was from the wife of one of their labourers. The woman called in the cold twilight of a spring evening, and as she stood in the porch—for Mrs. Bunce asked no one to enter and see the bareness of the house—she produced a jug from under her shawl. ‘Missis,’ she said, ‘I’ve brought ’ee a drop o’ rabbit broth for the gaffer, if so be as he’ll take some of it me and my master shall enjoy the rest a deal more hearty like.’

The tears sprang to Margaret’s eyes. ‘I’ll take it and thank you for it, Mrs. Hopper. Time back and I should have asked any labourer’s wife about the place pretty sharp ’ow she come by the rabbit. But wi’ the gaffer sick and nothing in the house it’s more than welcome.’

‘Why, missis, it’s never so bad with ’ee as that, surely!’ said Mrs. Hopper in an awe-stricken voice.

‘Aye, but it is, and I don’t mind telling you, for we’re poor women together now. But I cannot tell them that’s got full larders and cellars, like we’d use to have, I cannot tell them.’

Joe Bunce’s last trouble was to think what would become of his Margaret when he was gone.

‘It seems too bad o’ me, missis, going off safe and quiet out o’ this struggle that’s bin too much for me, and leaving you all alone by yourself to poverty and work!’

‘You needn’t think o’ me, Joe,’ said his old wife, taking his withered hand in hers. ‘If I’ve nothing else I’ve always had a good spirit of my own.’

‘Aye, but I cannot help thinking. I know you’d like to come along wi’ me if you could, and go to the churchyard together.’

‘That I should, Joe. You and me could never have gone to the workhouse to be parted; but when the Lord takes you, then I don’t mind what becomes o’ me. I’d as soon go there as anywhere—aye, sooner, p’raps!’

‘What! you as was always such a proud piece—you be willing to go to the workhouse!’ and the old man looked puzzled.

‘Yes, Joe. When you’re gone I shall ha’ lost pretty well everything as I can lose. And I’ve been thinking I’ve a right to the workhouse, and I’d ought to walk in at the door as if I was coming into my own property. Havn’t you and me paid our poor rates regular for fifty years, till we’re as poor ourselves as them we’ve helped to keep? Hasn’t our good money helped to

build the new workhouse up there on the hill? Hasn't our hard earnings helped to pay the master and the matron their salaries? Never you fear, Joe; if I go into the workhouse I shan't go as a pauper: I shall go as a patron that's paid her subscription regular for half a century. That's about the size of it, Joe, neither more nor less,' and Mrs. Bunce looked at her husband with an expression that showed she would be as good as her word. And though the old man was perplexed, he gloried in her spirit and was comforted.

A few days later and Joe Bunce's toil-worn body was at rest, and Margaret wished that she was laid by her husband's side. The bitterness of her lonely poverty overwhelmed her. Her courage gave way now that Joe was no longer there to be upheld by it, and the prospect of the workhouse became purely horrible. She was too old to maintain herself, and yet she would not ask her brother or anyone else to help her. If the worst came to the worst, at least she would be fed, clothed, and housed for nothing in the workhouse. True, if she went there she would be the first of her own or her husband's family to become a pauper, and she quailed at the thought. But her pride came to the rescue, and she argued, 'What o' that? No Thorpe or Bunce 'as paid their poor rates longer than what we have, and if I choose to go to the workhouse it's a honour to it and no disgrace to me,' and forthwith she sent an imperious message to the parish officers to look sharp and bury her husband.

None of the neighbours asked the old woman point-blank where she was going to when she left the farm. But if the subject was approached she was ready with the reply, 'Thank you, I'm pervided for!' and it was supposed that she had relations who would not see her want.

A couple of days after the old man's funeral the little girl, bringing the usual halfpenny-worth of milk in the morning, found the shutters closed and barred, the doors locked, and the house forsaken. No one had seen Mrs. Bunce leave the old home. She had set off in the direction of Grimthorpe Workhouse before the earliest labourer was stirring, and with white and set face walked on the high road, her lengthened shadow thrown before her by the rising sun. She had not had so long a walk for years, and it took her more than two hours to accomplish three miles. When she came in sight of the great, bleak-looking building that stood on rising ground overlooking a level tract of country bounded by a glittering sea line, Margaret stood still, and her face quivered with feeling. She was familiar with the outside of the workhouse.

She had driven past it in the spring cart on market days for many a year, and it was nothing to her then but a huge heap of bricks that served as a landmark for miles around. But now the bare building had gained a poignant significance, and become the one reality in the world besides her own existence. Henceforth the workhouse was to be her dwelling-place, for home was a thing of the past and a word of the past, till she should be borne from it to a pauper's grave.

A loud bell under a penthouse on the roof of the building suddenly began an insistent clanging for breakfast. The metallic din continued for five minutes, and at the last stroke of the bell Margaret Bunce crossed the threshold of the workhouse. She entered with a confident step, and on demanding to see the matron she was told to sit down and wait till Mrs. Creed was at liberty. The old woman was weary with her long walk, and thankfully sat down to rest, while her keen eyes scanned the bare paved hall with doors opening into it painted a dreary drab, and the untempered light from the blindless windows smiting on the white-washed walls. Presently one of the drab doors was swung open and the matron entered—a tall, stout woman with a not unkindly face, and a large bunch of keys hanging at her side.

'Are you the woman that wants to speak to me?' she said sharply.

'Yes, ma'm, I'm Mrs. Bunce,' replied Margaret, rising to her full height, which was that of a child compared to the tall matron; 'I'm the widow of Joseph Bunce the parish buried o' Tuesday last.'

'Well, and what do you want with me, Mrs. Bunce?'

'Not much, ma'm; I only want my lawful dues of you or anybody else. I'm here to claim my rights. My husband and me has paid our poor rates reg'lar for fifty 'ears—that 'ud be before you was weaned—and 'ad nothing from the parish but his coffin; and fifty 'ears' rates is a stiff price to pay for a buryin'. But I've come now to live i' the house for the rest of my life, and take out the value of our subscription i' that way.'

The matron had never met with an old woman like this before, and she perceived at once that she had to do with what she called 'a character.'

'But a person like you won't like being in the Union. You won't like the company, nor the victuals, nor nothing,' said the matron comprehensively. 'Have you got no children or relations that can keep you?'

'We never had no children, and I've no one to look to for help. We worked hard and paid our way till times got that bad a ferret couldn't scrat a living on the farm. Then we was worsted, and had to give in.'

'Aye, it's easy to see you've come down i' the world, Mrs. Bunce.'

'Maybe I have and maybe I havn't,' she replied with dignity. 'Me and my husband has paid the poor rates punctual for fifty 'ears, enough to keep me here in comfort the rest o' my days, and I don't feel it no coming down i' the world to come and claim my own.'

The matron laughed. 'Well, you'll want all the spirit you've got; it's none too much for what lies before you. And now come and have your breakfast.' And Margaret Bunce ate her first pauper meal with tears in her eyes, though her tongue was valiant as ever.

After a time of pure misery she began to settle into her new life and find an outlet for her energetic spirit. She held aloof from everyone and made no friends. She was especially angry if she suspected any of her companions of pitying her. 'Keep your pity till I ask for it, and then it's little enough I shall trouble you for,' she would say. Sometimes an ill-natured old woman would jibe her for her come-down in the world, but in return she always got worse than she gave. 'Come down in the world, have I? Then you're talking about what you don't know, for anyone can see as the workhouse is a rise for you, and it's a pity but what you came 'ere thirty 'ears sooner to learn manners!'

Margaret made herself useful to the matron, and was always willing to help in the infirmary. She slept so little that she would rather sit with the sick and dying than lie awake in her lonely bed with her sad thoughts and memories. Mrs. Bunce had been twelve months in the workhouse, where she was nicknamed behind her back 'Lady Bunce,' when one summer afternoon she asked for leave of absence for a few hours. She seldom cared to go out in the workhouse uniform—a dark blue gingham frock, scanty brown shawl, and brown straw bonnet trimmed with a strip of the same material as her dress, that proclaimed her a pauper to the least observant. But to-day she thought little about it; she hankered for a sight of Grimthorpe in all the bustle of market-day. She wished to see who had succeeded her in the market where she used to sell her own butter and poultry. Whoever it might be, at a venture the butter was not as well



made nor the chickens as well fed and dressed for table as hers had been.

The old workhouse woman threaded her way unobserved through the crowded streets like a disembodied spirit come back to visit the scenes of a previous life. She gazed in the windows of the shops where she had often entered as a welcome customer, and paid ready money over the counter, and farmers and their wives drove by in spring carts, as she and her husband had done in their prosperous days. Margaret met many a face that she knew, but no one recognised her, and the scanty workhouse shawl gathered about her meagre shoulders was in effect the fabled cloak of invisibility. She was too proud to speak first to any old acquaintance, and yet her heart yearned for recognition. Surely farmer Brodrick and his wife, who had shaken hands with her husband and herself in the church porch on Sundays for twenty years past—surely they would know an old neighbour in spite of her changed appearance. They were coming out of the shoemaker's shop close by, and Mrs. Brodrick's eye met Margaret's in full recognition. A sudden flush of confusion covered her face, and as Margaret eagerly advanced towards her she looked another way, and she heard her say to her husband: 'John, let's cross the road quick, there's Mrs. Bunce in her workhouse dress. I couldn't be seen speaking to her here!'

A surge of passionate resentment, of impotent hatred and scorn rose in the old woman's breast as she watched the Brodricks fly before the danger that menaced them. Her face grew white and hard as she muttered to herself, 'That's a thing I never could ha' done to any o' God's creatures!' when a second and a still greater surprise overtook her. A buxom young woman, unseen by Mrs. Bunce, had caught sight of her half the length of the street, and, bearing down upon her with a face broadening with smiles, fairly flung her arms about her neck, and pressed a hearty kiss on her withered cheek.

'Eh! missis, I'm right glad to see you again, I am,' and her faithful servant Joyce laughed aloud with pleasure.

Margaret was bewildered by surprise, and the sudden revulsion of feeling was almost more than she could bear, and tears streamed from her eyes.

'God bless you, my wench! You're not too proud to be seen speaking to an old friend, if she does wear a pauper's dress!' she said, trembling with feeling.

'It wasn't your dress as I was thinking of, missis, but I am proud to see you again. I only come home for a week's holiday

from my place yesterday, and I was on my way to find you at the workhouse when I see you 'ere in the street.'

'You were! Then you'd ha' been my first visitor since there I've been. I'll never forget it to you, Joyce, I never will.'

Joyce thought her poor old mistress strangely excited, and, taking her arm in hers, said: 'We'll go into that confectioner's shop, missis, and have a good talk. Many's the cup o' tea I've 'ad at your expense, and it's time now you had one at mine, and a bit o' something to eat along with it,' and very soon they were seated together with an ample meal before them. An old woman who also had an afternoon out from the workhouse peered through the shop window and caught sight of them seated as at a feast of the gods, and she hurried back with the news that she had seen 'Lady Bunce' at the confectioner's having tea out of a silver pot, like the nobility and gentry itself!

Joyce had done her old mistress good that she never imagined. She knew that she was glad to see her, and that she had refreshed her by a meal unlike any she was accustomed to nowadays. But what she could not know was that she had lifted a load of bitterness from her spirit, and restored her faith in human kindliness. 'I'll never forget it to you!' she said as she wrung Joyce's hand at parting, and the good creature thought what a fuss to make over a cup of tea and a bun!

For some days following her afternoon out 'Lady Bunce' was so much more cheerful and active that the matron wished a few hours' change had the same effect on all the old women in the workhouse. As one of her companions, who had suffered from Margaret's sharp tongue, noticing the improvement in her temper, said—'Her don't snap your nose off when you speak to 'er that reg'lar as 'er'd used to!'

Not many letters were delivered at the workhouse, and the pauper who received one became the object of piercing curiosity. One morning the gossip spread through the women's quarters that old 'Lady Bunce' had actually had a letter, and that after she had read it she took it with her to the matron's room. It was quite true, and the matron used to say it was the queerest interview she ever had with an inmate of the house. Margaret was white and trembling, and she held an open letter in her hand. She seemed to have grown taller, and there was a strange dignity about her.

'What is it you want with me?' asked the matron, puzzled by her manner.

'I wish to thank you, ma'm, for your civility to me while I've been here. I thought I'd come to stay here to the end, but I've only been on a visit after all—although I've paid for my board and keep over and over again in times past——'

'What's all this about—what do you mean?' interrupted the matron.

'I mean that this letter is from the lawyer to tell me that my brother is dead, and has left me money enough and to spare, so as I needn't stay here taking up some poor creature's room any longer. If only it 'ad come in my husband's time!' and her voice trembled.

'Well, I declare, Mrs. Bunce, you're the first person in this house that ever come into such a piece of good luck!'

'They shall all share it with me!' said Margaret eagerly. 'I'll treat every pauper in the place to a good dinner and a glass of red port wine afterwards! And to-morrow the lawyer's coming to bring me some money and take me away, and then I shall know as it's not all a dream!'

And the following day 'Lady Bunce,' accompanied by her late brother's solicitor, drove away from Grimthorpe Workhouse in a fly.

In a month's time the old woman and her faithful servant Joyce were settled together in a snug little home, and neighbours and acquaintance came thronging to call on Mrs. Bunce in her prosperity. But as none of them had been to see her during the year she had spent in the workhouse she gave them a reception that did not invite a second visit. Her good Joyce she adopted as her own child, and made her will in her favour, 'for you loved your old mistress,' she said, 'when others forgot her, and you weren't ashamed of me in my pauper's dress, and I said I'd never forget it to you, Joyce!'

Nor did Margaret forget Mrs. Brodrick's treatment of her when she was too proud to recognise her in the street. The next time they met her old acquaintance came hurrying after her to shake hands, and said, with many a gracious smile:

'Well, to be sure, Mrs. Bunce, this is a pleasure. I do congratulate you. I wish you joy of your new home! I shall be coming round this afternoon to have a cup o' tea with you.'

'You may spare yourself the trouble,' replied Margaret coldly. 'You'd feel it a condescension, and I should think it no honour. And I congratulate you too, Mrs. Brodrick, on getting your eyesight back again, for the last time you met me in the street you wasn't able to see me!'

LOUISA BALDWIN.

## *The Baltic Canal* *and How it Came to be Made.*

THE Baltic, although it may be regarded almost as an inland lake, being tideless and its water only partially salt, is the outlet for a great number of harbours situated on the German, Russian, Danish, and Finland coasts. These harbours are in communication with the interior of Germany and Russia by means of a vast network of navigable rivers and canals, one-fourth of Europe finding the outlet for its rain water into the Baltic. From these harbours are exported the produce of the countries to which they belong, consisting principally of grain, timber, wood pulp, hides, and tallow; and in return importing coal, machinery, manufactured goods, and colonial produce.

Of the 33,000 vessels engaged in this traffic about one-third sail under the British flag, the bulk of the remainder belonging to Russia, Germany, and Sweden in about equal proportions. The traffic has been rapidly increasing, and now reaches about eighteen millions of tons. Nearly the whole of the fir and oak timber used for constructional purposes on the east side of England and for coopering comes from the Baltic, that used on the west side being imported principally from America. A very large trade is also carried on in the importation of timber sleepers for the railways, and also in poles and timber for propping up the roofs in coal mines. The chief places for the import of timber are London, Grimsby, Hull, and Hartlepool, and for mining timber and sleepers Boston, Grimsby, Hartlepool, Sunderland, the Tyne, and the Scotch ports.

As the depth of water in most of the Baltic harbours is small, the large vessels engaged in the American and colonial trade are unable to enter them, and consequently generally stop at Copenhagen, and so avoid the dangerous passage of the Sound. Here the cargoes are unloaded and transferred to smaller vessels for

distribution to the various ports to which they are consigned. The Danish Government, alive to the danger of losing the monopoly of this traffic, which they have hitherto had, owing to the construction of the new canal, have within the last few years spent a million of money in improving their harbour and providing facilities for the transport and warehousing of merchandise in transit. Copenhagen has been declared a free port, and no customs duties are levied on merchandise landed solely for transit. The water area of the new port covers fifty-seven acres, and the quays have a depth of 30 feet at low water. There being no tide in the Sound, and only rarely ice enough in winter to block the navigation, the harbour is practically accessible at all times for vessels of the largest tonnage.

The Baltic is divided from the North Sea, which is the great highway to and from it for all the traffic trading to this country and other parts of the world, by the narrow neck of land constituting the provinces of Schleswig-Holstein and Jutland. This peninsula overlaps the southern part of Sweden, leaving only a narrow channel, which is further decreased in width by the island of Zealand, which divides it in two. These narrow gutways, known respectively as 'the Sound' and 'the Belts,' open out into the Cattegat, after traversing which vessels have to round the Skaw, the northernmost part of Jutland, and then double back southwards down the Skager Rack to the North Sea. The passage through the Sound and the Belts is strewn with dangers. The currents run very strong; its waterway of only three miles in width at the narrowest place in the Sound, and varying from four to twenty miles through the Belts, is enclosed by the rocky coast of Sweden on the one side and the flat, sandy coasts of Denmark on the other, and is encumbered with innumerable banks and shoals. Sudden and violent squalls frequently rise in these seas, adding to the other dangers, and often when the winds are contrary sailing vessels are delayed for several days, and sometimes weeks.

To assist the navigation of these dangerous seas the Danish Government, by treaty with the Hanse-towns in the fourteenth century, undertook to erect beacons and lights along the coast, in consideration for which all vessels navigating the Cattegat paid dues to Denmark. This power to levy dues remained in force for 500 years, and the 'Sound dues' were only abolished in 1857, under a treaty entered into by all the maritime nations of Europe, and by a subsequent treaty with the United States. In

consideration of Denmark still continuing to maintain the lighting and beaconing and the management of the pilot service, she was paid about four millions of money, of which Great Britain's share was 1,125,206*l*.

There is no part of the world which has such a black record for wrecks as these narrow seas. The number in some years has averaged more than one a day, the greatest number of wrecks recorded in one year being 425, and the smallest 154. About fifty per cent. of these vessels became total wrecks, all the crews being lost. In the four years 1877-81 no less than 700 lives were lost. With regard to these wrecks the fact, however, must not be lost sight of that many of the vessels navigating these seas are old and ill-found, especially those engaged in the timber trade, for which any vessel condemned for other traffic used to be thought good enough. Many boats which fail to pass the Board of Trade survey are sold to the Swedes and Norwegians, and run for many years afterwards in the Baltic trade. Sailing vessels are much more liable to be wrecked on these coasts than steamers, and as the former are rapidly being superseded the proportionate number of wrecks is decreasing.

It has been the dream of Denmark for the last 500 years to provide a remedy for the dangers of navigation in these seas by a marriage of the North Sea with the Baltic by means of a waterway across the peninsula, which at one time belonged to that country. In this Denmark partially succeeded by the construction of the Eider Canal; but the union has now been more effectually accomplished, but by Germany instead of Denmark.

At the end of the fourteenth century access from the Baltic to Hamburg and the North Sea was obtained by a canal made at the expense of the Hanse city of Lübeck. This waterway, which branched out from the Elbe, is still in existence. Other partial communications were also opened out, but it was not till the end of the last century that a waterway was made between the two seas by King Christian VII. of Denmark, by canalising the river Eider, and where necessary making new cuts. This canal runs from Kiel, in the Baltic, to Tönning, in the North Sea, at the mouth of the Elbe. It is partly tidal, and has six locks, the summit being 23 feet above the Baltic. It is 100 miles in length, 100 feet wide at the surface, and 10 feet deep. The locks are  $95\frac{1}{2}$  feet long and  $24\frac{1}{4}$  feet wide, with 9 feet of water on the sills. This work may be considered as a great undertaking for the time when it was accomplished,



and its need is evidenced by the fact that at one time as many as 4,000 vessels used it in one year. As steam became more generally used the number fell off to 1,500 in 1863. During the Franco-German war, when the German navy was kept in check by the French men-of-war lying off Heligoland, where they were stationed to keep watch over the Sound, this canal was made use of by the Germans for the passage of gunboats and transports.

Useful, however, as this canal has been in its time, the increase in the size of vessels made an enlarged and improved waterway a necessity. After Schleswig and Holstein had been transferred from Danish to German rule, and the two countries were once more on peaceful terms, the matter of the canal was taken up by the State of Prussia, and in 1864 instructions were given for the preparation of a scheme for a new canal. The matter was, however, shelved, owing to the war which broke out between Prussia and Austria, and afterwards by the Franco-German war of 1870.

In 1878 Herr Dahlström, a merchant of Hamburg, at his own expense, took the matter up, and had surveys made and a scheme prepared very much on the lines subsequently carried out.

This scheme was laid before the first Emperor William, who at once realised its importance. The Franco-German war, although it had led to delay in the making of the canal, had presented an object lesson on naval affairs which was not to be disregarded.

The naval force of Germany, small and weak as it was at that time, was yet divided into two parts—one in the Baltic for the defence of those coasts, and the other on the Elbe—the two portions being prevented from uniting by the French fleet, which at the beginning of hostilities was stationed so as to command the Sound, and thus prevented all sea communication between the two German naval stations at Kiel and Wilhelmshaven. Thus the German navy was paralysed and unable to be of assistance to the land forces.

The advantage of Heligoland, which was ceded to Germany by this country in exchange for concessions on the African continent, either to an attacking or defending force, became manifest. Any large fleet attempting to navigate the Elbe, the Jade, or the Weser, owing to the depth required for the vessels, must come within a measurable distance of this island, and its value as a means of protection to the naval station at Wilhelmshaven and of the commerce of Hamburg and Bremen cannot be overrated, more



especially since the opening of the new canal into the Elbe. The transfer from England to Germany of this island, combined with the opening out of a waterway capable of being navigated by the largest class of war vessels across the Jutland peninsula, has thus added immensely to the power of Germany in these northern seas.

When Herr Dahlström's scheme was brought to the notice of the Emperor he at once realised its importance by opening out a road for the two fleets, without their having to navigate through Danish territory, or being exposed to the dangers of a hostile fleet commanding the Sound, while at the same time it would provide a means for German ships to navigate between Hamburg and Bremen and the Baltic without going out of German territory. The Emperor's advisers, however, were not unanimous in their opinion as to the advantages to be derived from the projected canal. Moltke's views, as openly expressed, were that if Germany was ready to find the sum which the canal would cost for military purposes, the amount would be better expended in a second fleet, instead of on a canal for the fleet; that if it was contended that it was necessary for commercial purposes, then other nations would benefit more from it than Germany; and if it was further urged that these other countries would contribute towards the cost, in that case the canal would then have to be considered as international, and therefore useless from a military point of view. The Emperor and the Reichstag, however, took a different view. The scheme was passed and the matter relegated to the executive to carry out, the necessary funds being voted for the purpose on condition that the State of Prussia, the part of the Empire that would derive the greatest gain from it commercially, undertook to guarantee the interest on two and a quarter millions of pounds, or rather more than one-fourth of the estimated outlay.

The Government having adopted the canal, the surveys and plans for the work were pushed rapidly forward, and as soon as these were completed the inauguration ceremony took place in the presence of the Emperor William I., in June 1887, when he declared the work to be 'for the honour of Germany, and for the good, the greatness, and the strength of the Empire.' Eight years later, in June last, amidst much pomp and ceremony, his grandson, the present Emperor William, declared the canal open for traffic.

Kiel Bay, which forms the terminus of the canal at the Baltic

end, is a magnificent harbour, six miles long and a mile and a quarter wide, opening out into a large outer bay, which forms a safe and commodious roadstead. It has perfect anchorage, with a depth of from 30 to 50 feet, and is sufficiently capacious for all the largest vessels of the German navy to manœuvre. The country round this port and naval station is famous for its forest and lake scenery, and has within the last few years been visited by great numbers of English yachts, owing to the regattas which have been held under the fostering patronage of the Emperor. The Baltic, with its beautiful woodland scenery and lovely deep blue water and its quaint fishing villages, now that it has been rendered more accessible, will no doubt become a favourite cruising ground for yachtsmen during the summer days and the bright nights of the north.

The other terminus is at Holtenau, about eighteen miles up the Elbe. The country here, with its desolate tract of low flat sandy coast, presents a great contrast to that of Kiel.

For some distance the canal pursues the course of the old Eider Canal, a portion of which it has absorbed, the remainder being connected with the new waterway by a lock. The canal is  $61\frac{1}{2}$  miles long, two-thirds the length of the Suez, and not quite double that of the Manchester Ship Canal. The water is practically level throughout, locks being placed at the Elbe end to provide for the rise and fall of the tide, and at the Baltic end only to be used during heavy gales, when the level of the sea is affected by the wind. The rise of the tide in the Elbe is 10 feet, or in very extreme cases 15 feet, and very heavy gales occasionally raise or depress the surface of the Baltic several feet. Under extreme circumstances there might be a sufficient difference of level to make locks at each end a necessity. The locks are very substantial and massive structures, and have added nearly a million to the cost of the canal. They claim to be, if not for actual length or width, yet the largest in the world, and are of sufficient capacity to admit war-ships of the first class and vessels as large as the Atlantic liners. The largest dock and ship canal locks in this country are built singly, or if, as in the case of the Manchester Ship Canal, there is more than one lock, these are of different sizes, for the purpose of passing larger or smaller vessels, as the case may be, and so economising water. Those, however, on the Baltic Canal are built in pairs, each of equal capacity, one lock being intended for vessels entering and the other for those leaving, a system which, though adding largely to the cost, has

the advantage that if any accident happened to one set of gates, or to the appliances for opening and closing them, the other lock would be available. The total length of these locks is 712 feet, the useful length, or that between the gates, being 492 feet. The width is 82 feet, and the depth of water on the sill  $31\frac{1}{2}$  feet. As a comparison with these dimensions it may be stated that some of our largest men-of-war are 367 feet long, 68 feet wide, and have 28 feet draught; and the large Atlantic liners are 558 feet long, 72 feet wide, with 26 feet draught. These, therefore, could only pass through at high water.

The canal is crossed by six main roads and four railways, for which six fixed bridges, having single spans of 512 feet, giving a headway of 138 feet, and four swing bridges, having a waterway of 164 feet, have been provided. Communication between the two sides, where the less important roads have been intersected, is afforded by flat-bottomed ferry boats placed every four miles apart, and worked by wire ropes; or by a roadway resting on stages fixed on boats which swing across the canal.

The country through which the canal has been cut is generally flat, and in places low and marshy, especially along the part near the Elbe, the level of the water in some places being above that of the land through which the canal passes. For a short distance near Grünthal, at the watershed of the Elbe and the Eider, there is a cutting of nearly 100 feet in depth. The soil varied very much, in places consisting principally of very compact and hard glacial drift interspersed with large boulders, some of which had to be blasted before they could be removed. The deep cutting at Grünthal was through strata consisting of clay in disturbed beds, and occasioned much trouble from the sides slipping into the excavation. Along the marshes the surface consisted of a mossy turf with a marly subsoil, in some places so soft as to be incapable of bearing the tread of the men, and which filled up the excavation as fast as it was made. This part of the work gave the greatest trouble, and the difficulty was only overcome by bringing sand from other parts in trucks along a railway made for the purpose, and tipping it from stages into the bog, the sand sinking in some places to a depth of 30 feet below the surface, while the bog spewed up in a most remarkable manner for a width of 50 feet. When sufficient sand had been tipped to form two solid banks, or dams, on either side the material was excavated from between them. The quantity of sand used in  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles of this boggy ground was over  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million cubic yards. The total quantity of

material excavated amounted to 100,000,000 cubic yards, or double that required for the Manchester Ship Canal, and about one-fifth more than for the Suez.

The works were carried out under the direction of an imperial department, or canal commission, consisting of a director, two chief engineers, and a legal adviser. The headquarters were situated at Kiel. The canal was divided into five sections, each having its separate staff and employing about fifty engineers, who were drawn for the purpose from Government departments in different parts of the empire. The principal works were let by tender to contractors in divisions under the separate heads of earth work, masonry, machinery, &c.

For the working of the canal and pilots a permanent department has been organised, which forms two small colonies of offices, workshops, and residences at Holtenau and Brunsbüttel.

The peninsula through which the canal passes is only very sparsely populated, and the few inhabitants who live there have plenty of employment in tilling their land and tending their cattle, and are of too independent a character to care about working for wages. They are the descendants of the old Jutes and Angles who many centuries ago came to this country on plundering expeditions, many of them remaining behind and populating a great part of East Anglia. The men from the Elbe marshes found a congenial home in the fens of Lincolnshire, a great resemblance in manners and appearance being said to exist at the present day between the marsh men of the Elbe and the inhabitants of the Fenland. Brunsbüttel was the chief home of the pirates, who in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries harried the Hamburg traders, and the people who now inhabit the Jutland peninsula can claim as distinguished pirates and adventurers amongst their ancestors as any aristocratic German baron or count. The natives of these parts also used to bear an unenviable notoriety for looking upon the wrecks which were so numerous stranded on their coast as a legitimate means of adding to their resources. An old tradition exists that prayers at one time used to be offered up in the churches that 'their coasts might be blessed,' the interpretation put upon which by a pastor who was remonstrated with for using such a prayer being that he did not pray for wrecks, but that if in the divine wisdom of Providence wrecks must be, all he asked was that they might happen on the part of the coast inhabited by his parishioners.

As at times from 8,000 to 10,000 labourers, mechanics, and

overseers were employed on the canal, it was necessary not only to import men from other places, but also to provide for housing and feeding them. These imported men were principally Germans, Poles, and Italians, and it speaks well for the management that the aggregation of so much political effervescence as was brought together did not lead to any strikes or disturbances.

The wages paid varied from three shillings upwards, many of the better class of labourers being able to earn eight shillings a day at piece-work. Many of the men of frugal habits who remained on the work from commencement to finish, owing to the cheapness of their food and lodging, and to the aid given by the savings banks which formed part of the system, were enabled to save enough to keep them for the rest of their days.

The accommodation required was not left to be provided by the various contractors, but was undertaken by the Government. Large barracks were built, each capable of accommodating from fifty to a hundred men. They were provided with dining-halls, which were also used for service on Sundays. As far as possible the different nationalities were aggregated together in separate barracks. The dormitories held from eight to ten men each, and were provided with an iron bedstead, seaweed mattress, bolster, sheets and blankets, and a locker and stool. Two principal hospitals were provided, but each separate building had its own surgery and dispensary. Stores were maintained where clothes, tobacco, and other requirements could be obtained at cost price.

The general management, as far as possible, was conducted as a military organisation. The average number of working hours was ten. Before going to work, which commenced at six o'clock when it was light, the men were supplied with coffee and rolls. The second breakfast, consisting of coffee, rolls, and sausages, was sent on to the works. Dinner was served in the dining-hall at twelve, and supper after work was finished. The pay for an ordinary labourer for lodging, lights, and morning coffee, dinner, and washing was  $7\frac{1}{2}d.$  a day, breakfast and supper being paid for extra. Beer was not forbidden, but its use was not encouraged. Accommodation was provided for the wives, who were employed in the kitchen and laundry, but they were not allowed to work on the canal.

The canal is lighted throughout by electricity. In the Suez Canal the lighting is effected by powerful electric lamps placed on the vessels, which illuminate the space for some distance in front.

On the Baltic Canal the system consists of incandescent lights on posts fixed at intervals on the banks and at the locks.

Although the construction of the canal has not involved any very special engineering, such as was required to overcome the difficulties met with in the Manchester Ship Canal, the works have been well designed and well carried out. The locks are substantially and well built, and the bridges and buildings show evidence of careful design, neat finish, and good workmanship, and in some cases of architectural taste.

Compared with other works of a similar character, merit may certainly be claimed for the fact that the canal has been completed for less than the original estimate, and within the time originally stated. To a great extent this no doubt arises from the money having been provided by Government, and hence the absence of any necessity for payments for financing the scheme, such as were so freely squandered on the Suez Canal; there was also no outlet for the large sums paid for the Manchester Ship Canal in obtaining the necessary parliamentary sanction, in law costs, and in compensation for vested rights. The total cost has been about seven and three-quarter millions of pounds, as compared with sixteen millions for the Manchester Ship Canal and twenty millions for the Suez Canal.

As regards the commercial advantages of the new waterway, whatever will be Germany's gain will to a great extent be Denmark's loss. The two rivals, although each declaring the best intentions, are jealously watching one another. It remains to be seen whether the attractions at Copenhagen and the inducements offered for vessels to make use of the new free port will be sufficient to counteract the rival claims of the canal. For vessels trading to England from the Baltic there will be a saving of distance, and consequent gain in time and safety; but to set against this it is anticipated that the improved waterway will open up a market in the Baltic ports for the sale of Westphalian coal, which, owing to the difficulty of transit, has not hitherto been able to compete with English coal. The opening up of the Dortmund-Ems Canal, which will be completed next year, will place the Westphalian coal fields in direct communication with the Baltic, and permit of the traffic of vessels of 500 tons. The exports of British coal in 1893 to Russia amounted in value to 770,148*l.*; to Sweden, 788,678*l.*; to Denmark, 668,072*l.*; and to the German Baltic ports 500,000*l.* This traffic is of great importance to this country, not only for its direct benefit in the



sale of the mineral, but in reducing the freight of timber and other produce by providing return cargoes for the vessels employed.

For vessels going from the Baltic to Hamburg and up the Elbe the saving in distance by the new canal will be over 400 miles, which is equal to a saving in time for a steamer of about two days; for vessels going to Bremerhaven, 323 miles; to the Dutch ports, 237 miles; to Dover and all ports to the south and west, 239 miles; to Hull, 180 miles; to Newcastle, 107. North of this to the Scotch ports the saving will be little or nothing. Allowing for the decreased speed through the canal, the saving in time for vessels passing Dover will be about ten hours, and also there will be the saving of pilot dues through the Sound. The dues imposed for using the canal are, however, heavy, and will deter all the smaller class of steamers and those carrying merchandise commanding low-priced freights from making use of it. It is also contended that in winter the Elbe is much more frequently frozen, and for a longer time than the Sound, and that the danger of navigation is often as great as by the other route. So far the traffic has certainly not come up to expectation, except in the case of the Hamburg trade, three-fourths of the vessels using the canal going to and from that port. The opinion at present of shipowners and traders is that while the dues remain at the present rate it will only pay in the case of very few vessels to use the canal. It has been found that for vessels of about 800 tons from London to the Baltic the dues will amount to more than the saving in coal, wages, and other expenses by the old route.

Considerable improvement in the harbours and rivers in the Baltic and in the Elbe has recently been going on, partly in anticipation of the increased traffic which is expected to result on the opening of the canal. A million and a half has been spent in deepening and improving the Weser, so as to provide for the navigation of the largest class of vessels up to Bremen. A deep-water harbour has been constructed at Cuxhaven, at the mouth of the Elbe. The quays and depth of water at Hamburg have been greatly improved. At Stettin and Königsberg large works of improvement are now in progress; Russia is constructing a new harbour at the mouth of the Neva, and both this country and Germany are opening out and improving very largely their rivers and canals. The Danish works at Copenhagen have already been referred to, and Sweden, not to be left behind, is following suit at Malmö.



The opening of the North Sea and Baltic, or Nord-Ost-See Canal, as it has generally been known in Germany, was effected by the Emperor William III., with much pomp and ceremony, and received its official name as the 'Kaiser Wilhelm Canal.' Following the example set by De Lesseps at the opening of the Suez Canal, the inauguration was made an international affair. All the great European maritime nations and the United States were invited to send representatives. Germany herself had seventeen of her largest war-ships present. England was represented by the Royal yacht *Osborne*, with the Duke of York on board, and the Admiralty yacht *Enchantress*, and three battle-ships, three cruisers, and three gunboats. Italy sent eight ships; the United States, four. France, Russia, Holland, Norway and Sweden, Denmark, Austria, Spain, Turkey, Roumania, were all represented. The procession took eight hours to pass through the canal, and was led by the Emperor in the Imperial yacht *Hohenzollern*, which was followed by twenty-three vessels carrying the principal guests. The officers and crews of all the vessels were liberally entertained by the German authorities, and a week of festivities was kept up, ending with a regatta for yachts at Kiel. It was certainly a remarkable feature of the times to see all these mighty engines of destruction, belonging to different, and at times hostile, nations, engaged in taking part in such a peaceful ceremony. Such a gathering together of ships of war of all nations for peaceful purposes had certainly never been previously witnessed in the history of the world. If the best guarantee of peace is to be prepared for war, then this naval demonstration at Kiel was an object lesson not to be forgotten.

Among all this harmony and rejoicing there were not wanting, however, persons of a sufficiently cynical turn of mind to ask why all these nations should come together to rejoice because Germany was endeavouring not only to steal a march over her neighbours in her commercial relations, but had strengthened her naval resources, and obtained an advantage over at least some of those who were represented in any contest which future political complications may at any time bring about.

W. H. WHEELER.

## *The Bondager.*

### I.

ONE evening, at that early period of summer when the last faded blossoms are withering on the hawthorns, and a golden yellow comes on broom and gorse, a youth of nineteen was tramping along the dusty white road that led across a Northumbrian moor. His dress and appearance were those of a superior rustic—an intelligent boy whom his father had schooled and destined for some more ambitious calling than the plough-tail. Thunder had been rumbling all the afternoon and was now growing loud and frequent. Big drops of rain had already begun to fall as he came in front of a little wayside cottage, with a low front wall and a roof of green lichen'd thatch drooping to the very earth at the back. A hoe stood against the lintel, as if it had been placed there by some one just returned from fieldwork; and on his knocking at the door he was answered by an invitation to come in by an elderly woman still wearing the outworkers' 'ugly,' or large sun-bonnet. She had apparently been lighting the fire with dry sticks gathered on her way back from the turnip-field, for some were crackling and blazing round the kettle that hung from an old-fashioned 'swey,' or crook, and the rest lay on the hearth. At a glance the boy took in all the common characteristics of the bondager's home: a wooden bed, under which the coals and potatoes were kept, a scrubbed and sanded brick floor, a dresser with a row of plates, pill-boxes and ointments telling of rheumatism and rustic faith in quackery, a loud-ticking wag-at-the-wa', and Scripture texts pinned to the wall.

The first impression produced by the owner was that she was as common and typical as her furniture, since age and toil had withered her features and exposure had reduced her originally bright complexion to a dull mahogany, while a simple, credulous expression completed the picture of a silly, worn-out, and un-

interesting old woman. And yet she exercised an indefinable attraction that was more decidedly manifested when she began to speak, which she did in a slow, deliberate manner, breaking the words into syllables, yet stringing them together on an endless filament of sing-song.

'Come away ben, my man, and take a seat,' she said, almost before the young man had asked for shelter. 'No, no, hinny, you'll no walk ony farther the night. Desht wait here and you'll get a cast wi' the post gig, and I'll make you a cup of tea.'

If it were possible, it would only be puzzling to reproduce her dialect in the breadth with which it was spoken, for the reader might not understand as well as her visitor did that 'hiz yins' meant 'us,' and 'wurras' 'ours,' to take two constantly recurring examples. 'Go set! But this'll lay the stour,' she exclaimed as the rain-drops now pelted against the little diamond panes. Then, when the tea had 'masked,' and she had drawn her little three-legged stool, or 'cracky,' to the table and placed her visitor on the only other seat, a rickety chair, she said comfortably: 'Now dinna be feared, but pit oot hand and help yoursel,' which he did without much pressing, taking turn and turn about with the only knife, which was used alternately to cut the bread and spread the butter, and dipping his spoon into a basin which bore the warning, 'Be canny with the sugar.'

The lonely old woman was evidently very glad of a little company, and liked the lad's quiet, honest face. So she began by giving him a long account of her pains, the everlasting topic of her class, and explaining about the various cures she had tried. He quite understood, and remarked that this came of having to be out in all kinds of weather.

'Aye, hinny, you may well say that,' she replied. 'Wunter's a verra tryin' time for hiz yins that have to pull turnips and turn the cutter, and often fork corn to the thrasher when the grund's white and the laddies sclidin'. Go, I've heard men-folk say they liked the smell of a young bean-field when the bees are bummin' in 't after a shower of rain, and young lads are fond of the saint of new-cut hay when them and their sweathearts are teddin' it; mony a romp we had when I was a lass, and jimp young women are fond of the quiet lonnins in the gloamin', when the red and white briary roses are oot; but the awd bondager thinks no smell so fine as the smell o' burnin' quickens; <sup>1</sup> for, when the little fires

<sup>1</sup> Quickens, the roets of couch-grass, gathered, dried, and burnt in little heaps before spring crops are sown.

are smokin' and blazin' on the ploughed land, and the blowsterous Maurch wind's fair bitin' wi' reek, it's a sure sign that the warst is by for the year and we're comin' on to the canny time o' spring. I liket the shearin' when I was young and gatherin' taties, but when you get up in years you begin to think the fireside the best merrymaking you can get.'

One thing led to another, and it was with a wistful look, that sat curiously on her age-puckered face and scanty grey hair, that she began to tell, in the tone of one not sure of being believed, that in her time she, too, had been a queen of harvest-field and kirm dance.

'You'll desht think I'm silly for tellin' you,' she said, 'but when I ga'ed into the stackyard on the top o' the last load o' corn, wi' the shearers and binders a' laughin' ahint, folk said the horses never had pulled in a bonnier lass. Eh, my dear, I was both daft and supple then and the steward and me led off the dance at the supper, and we kept it up till yokin' time in the mornin'.'

She had found a good listener, and her heart warmed to him. 'Eh, my dear!' she exclaimed, 'I div like to see you sittin' there, for you mind me o' my bairn. I had as bonny a laddie as ever you saw, hinny, but the folk were so bad to him he ran away, and I'm always expectin' him back. I' the dark nights I aye keep a cannle burnin' i' the end window, and every step that gans past I think maun be his.' As she paused the visitor expressed a hope that the runaway would drop in one day when she least expected it, and she went on, 'He was fowerteen when they garred him run away, and if he had axed me I'd a followed him had it been to sleep at the dyke back. He'll be a fine young man now, as big as you, and, maybe, as bonny. And I've made things for him, and knitted stockin's; and my faither's big watch that never went I've aye keepit for him, cause he'll be a man now and want to carry a watch when he gans to see the lasses.'

Opening the door of a little cupboard, she added, 'See, he'll ken his mother didna forget him; I've kept a' his things since he was a babby, for the time'll come when he may want them for a bairn of his own,' and she took out the white wallet in which he had carried his school dinner of bread and cheese and a tin bottle of cold tea, a broken slate with a game of 'fickley o's' never rubbed out, a tattered Gray's arithmetic, and the 'collection' in which he used to read. 'He worked oot in summer and I paid for his schoolin' every winter,' she said as the youth opened one of the

books. He was surprised to see from the name and date that the child had apparently been to school more than thirty years before. If that were true he must be a man getting on to fifty—an appalling old age to nineteen. But Grace Nesbit had her own crazy ideas of chronology, and refused to entertain the thought. ‘Houts, bairn!’ she exclaimed when he pointed out the discrepancy, ‘d’ye think he can be as awd as his mother? You’ll see when he comes back he’s desht as young and yald as you are.’

In his inexperience he tried to show that she must have made a mistake, but her mind, sound enough in all other respects, could not realise the lapse of time. A lack of education and an unhealthy habit of brooding on one topic during her long solitary tasks in the field, and the equal loneliness of the cottage, had combined to form a hallucination nothing could erase.

The youth, seeing the hopelessness of argument, and being now refreshed with his rest, rose to go, but, before doing so, moved by the poverty-stricken appearance of the woman and her surroundings, he put his hand into a slenderly furnished pocket to give her something for her trouble, but she refused anything of the kind. ‘No, no, laddie,’ said she, ‘I’m better provided than you think for. I’ve always been savin’ agin his comin’ back, and young folk never have mair money than they want; but mind, hinny, and come in whenever you’re passin’; you may na get much good, you’ll never get ony ill frae awd Gracie. But what for are you hurryin’ when you could get a lift with the post?’

‘Oh, it’s a fine night now,’ said the boy, for the moorland birds were twittering and a clear twilight was settling down on the green refreshed fields. ‘I’m taking a near cut across the common and up the west slack o’ the hill, and they’re not expectin’ me back.’ The grave look that came to his face appeared to suggest that preoccupation with troubles of his own partly accounted for the patience with which he had endured the woman’s long gossip. ‘They’re not expectin’ me back,’ he repeated. ‘I’m the herd’s son of Skelterburn, and I’ve run away from my place.’

‘Hout now, laddie,’ said the old woman soothingly; ‘dinna be cussen doon about that. You’re young and yebble, and he mun ha’ been a bad maister if a likely lad like you had to take F’reich leave.’

‘It was Davis, the money-lender,’ replied the boy, glad to relieve his mind to any one. ‘Father made me answer the advertisement because he had paid a lot for my schoolin’ and

wanted me to get into town; but I would sooner ca' sheep about the Cheviot Hills a' my life than have to worry the life out o' folk for rent and interest. They say Davis came to the place a poor laddie and got some job in a pawnshop, and a queer business they say it was. The man in time died and he married the widow. She carries on the shop now, and he lends money to hard-up farmers and such-like. When he made me go and crave Mat Elliot—you'll ken him, he was steward here once—and it being clippin'-time, at any rate, when I'm sure of a job, I just started to tramp back to Skelterburn.'

'Mextus Atty! what did you say about Mattha Elliot?' asked the slow old woman with a startled energy she had not previously displayed.

'Aye, I thought you would be sorry, for he belonged to these parts,' answered he. 'Mat had bad luck, and not enough capital when he took Broomieknowe Farm. So he began to borrow from Davis, and everybody that does that is ruined in the end. If Mat can't raise the interest—Davis is comin' for 't the morn—there's an end to his farm, for Davis is as hard as a grindstone.'

'I am sorry to hear that,' exclaimed the old woman, 'I worked to Mattha for many a year when he was the steward, and him and his wife were verra good to me and my bairn when we sair needed it. But his friends 'll help him, wull they no, hinny?'

'They've done as much as they can already,' he replied. 'If he hasn't the money the morn he'll be turned out o' house and hold. Davis is not the man to rest till he has had the last penny.'

After giving full particulars of the case the boy started homewards and the old woman drew in her stool to the dying embers of the fire, and, taking out a dirty clay pipe, lit it and smoked, for, like many outworking women, obliged to be almost manlike in their work and dress, she imitated the male sex in a love of tobacco, and as she puffed and muttered to herself she again and again eyed a certain brick in the floor under which were concealed the small hoardings of a lifetime. 'It was for the laddie I pingled and scarted it together,' she soliloquised aloud, and then, 'had it no been for him, me and the bairn would both ha' been in the workhouse.' But at last she put out her pipe, laid it carefully away in its nook beside the fireplace, put on her 'gathering coal,' carefully raked the ashes over to keep it from burning too quickly, and retired to rest with her mind made up to take a very singular step in the morning.

## II.

ON a brilliant summer day it would have been difficult for any chance passer-by to imagine that trouble or distress could be within the homestead of Matthew Elliot. With its neat flower-plot before the door, and a famous yellow rose drooping in myriads from the white wall; with its wealth of pigs and ducks and hens and geese grunting and squeaking and cackling from a barnyard shaded by elms, from which a colony of rooks sent forth a ceaseless gurgling murmur as the young tried simultaneously to swallow their food and call for more, it seemed to present an ideal of rustic peace and happiness. Yet the round honest face of the farmer was clouded with anxiety, as in the middle of the forenoon he sat in the garden waiting for his bees to swarm and dreading the arrival of a visitor whom he had returned from the fields to meet. We say 'sat,' but, as a matter of fact, he could not keep the same position five minutes together. He flung himself into the rustic arbour, then jumped up and walked up between the gooseberry bushes to the hives where the bees were hanging out in large buzzing clusters ready to follow a new queen, and restlessly he turned to the house, said an irritable word to 'Marget,' his placid-tempered wife, and whisked back into the garden again. This was very unusual behaviour on his part, but the situation offered a good excuse for it. As far back as he could remember, it had been his ambition to take this little farm, and for many a frugal year he had saved for the purpose. When he did at last venture on the tenancy it was with a certain trust in luck. The whole of his capital was needed to stock and work it for the first twelve months. He had not a penny to fall back upon in case of need. Fortune, with her usual caprice, deserted him at the critical moment. Instead of the crowded stackyard and large increase for which he hoped, she sent the rinderpest among his cattle and he had never recovered from the blow. It is just possible that he might have done so, but for the fact of his falling into a snare continually set for the distressed farmer; in other words, he had gone a-borrowing from one of those harpies whose extortions are a disgrace to rural England. If once the simple husbandman gets into their clutches it is nearly impossible for him to escape; and though Elliot had made a gallant effort to do so, he seemed as far off as ever from succeeding. After returning more than the sum originally borrowed, in the shape of fees and



interest, not only was the principal still unreduced, but this year he had been obliged to let his payments fall into arrears. For these he was now being pressed by the money-lender, who, though the farmer was not shrewd enough to guess it, only refrained from carrying things to an extremity because certain facts that had come out in a recent and very bad exposure had made him reluctant to face the County Court Judge with a case in which his proceedings had been shady.

Even at the very time when Matthew was clenching his fist in the garden and muttering 'Dang the man! If he would but give us till after harvest I'd pull through yet,' Mr. Davis was being driven along from the station in a gig. He was in every respect a mean-looking man—mean in his dress, as though he grudged to spend a penny more than he could help on it; mean in his face, with little greedy eyes and mean thin lips covered with thin, close-clipped grizzly hair. 'Miser,' in a word, was written all over him. His only happiness—if the satisfaction it yielded him can be called happiness—lay in getting money or in contriving expedients to avoid spending it. The very trap in which he came along he had got without paying for, from an hotel keeper who was in his debt. It was extremely little he cared for the beautiful lane shaded with waving green elm boughs, or the corn-fields glistening and glowing in the sun, or the sheep panting beneath the shade, or the blue and distant mountains, that would have awakened the admiration of any but an earthworm.

And yet there was one little rustic scene that seemed to rivet his attention. It was a farm cart drawn by a heavy draught horse and driven by an elderly rustic with a shaggy merry face, who sat on the 'limmer,' and whistled and sang in almost insolent carelessness as the hired gig, which he was shrewd enough to distinguish from the conveyances of the neighbouring farmers or gentry, drove past. At the bottom of the cart was a bunch of straw on which sat the smiling and antique figure of a woman dressed in the scuttle bonnet, rusty black gown and plaid worn ages ago by country folk, and grasping, as though she feared it would fall through the cart, a 'reticule' or market basket well stuffed, as it seemed, with something or other.

It was not the old woman, however, who attracted the attention of the money-lender, but her companion, at sight of whom he seemed to 'creep into himself' as the gig swept past the cart. Yet the rustic had nothing extraordinary in his appearance, unless it were a something that told of a roving disposition and the

habits of a ne'er-do-well, for he was one of those who spend a lifetime in wandering, and eventually drift back to their native place poorer than when they left. Whatever the cause might be, after passing the party Mr. Davis made his driver hurry on, and he looked round several times to see if the cart had turned off or was still following in the same direction. That it did, for Gracie, who was the old woman in her Sunday clothes, said as he passed, 'Now, Watty, my man, we maun try and make Dobbin get on a bit faster, for as sure as I'm here it's come into my mind that's the verra man the laddie spoke about.'

'If it is,' replied the carter, 'I've seen him before, but where I dinna mind. Only what's the use of heedin' your daft notions? Div you no think yoursel' silly now to come here on this fool's errand?'

'Eh, Wat, hinny,' she replied, placidly. 'Mony a time I carried you when you was desht a babby, and mony a piece I gave you when you played wi' my laddie on the common, and maybe there's mair in awd Gracie's heid than you think now.'

Meantime the money-lender, closely followed by the strange couple, had driven up to the farmhouse.

He did not let the groom unyoke the horse, but saying he intended to return almost immediately, made his way into the garden, where he had seen the farmer. But here a delay occurred, for just before he entered a large swarm had come off, and Matthew, without a hood or any other protection, was standing with a skep in his hand amid a brown cloud of humming bees. He cried to his visitor to 'come away; they would not sting when they were casting'; but, as Mr. Davis began striking with his hand at the first insect that came buzzing round, a sharp pain in his cheek belied the former's words, and he rushed off to a safe distance. Elliot was not himself a very quick man, and under the circumstances was not disposed to hurry, besides being aware that steadiness and gentleness are necessary qualities in dealing with bees. Thus, to the dismay of Mr. Davis, the farm cart had rumbled up to the door before they had done much more than begin their conversation. Who the visitor was, the carter soon learned from the man in charge of the gig, and Grace hurried away to make a third in the colloquy while Watty looked after his horse.

As the old woman came up to the shady summer-house to which the men had retired, the farmer, in a gruff manly way that meant a great deal to those who knew him, had been saying, 'What's the good o' batherin' me now when I haven't it? Let the thing bide till

after harvest an' you'll get paid. It's only ruinin' a man to press him at this time o' the year.'

'But there are two quarters' interest not paid,' the money-lender was saying. 'I'm making a very fair offer. Get twenty-five pounds for me in a week and twenty-five a month after, and I'll let the rest lie over till the back end of the year when you get the money for your crops.'

'I tell you it canna be done—not if I've to be broken and taken to the workhouse,' Matthew was beginning, when the old woman, carrying the reticule and wearing her usual smile, entered into the summer-house.

The money-lender, who had not been able to see her features in the cart, gave an almost imperceptible start and edged himself away into a corner. But the old woman paid not the slightest attention.

'Mattha, hinny,' she said, as with fingers that trembled a little she began to unfasten the lid of her reticule, 'you and your wife was good friends to me and my bairn when we sair needed it, and so I desht said to mysel' last night, "Now, if the laddie was here and kenned Mattha was in trouble, what would he say?" And it was a' as quiet as quiet, you ken, desht the hoolet cryin' now and then, and the rats fustlin' below the bed. I thought I heard him say, "Mother, you and me's hardy folk, and so you'll desht gie him what you have." By this time she had produced from her basket two little sacking bags such as farmers carry samples of wheat in; and saying, 'I saved and pingled it for the laddie, you ken, and I always put mair than half my wages in when it was summer; but when the laddie comes back, my dear, he'll be well to pass and think I did right,' she poured the silver and copper coins into her lap and offered him them all. 'It'll be mair than you need,' she added simply, 'but the rest 'ill help you past the harvest.'

Matthew Elliot did not stop to consider that the old woman's arithmetic was as faulty as her chronology, and that the brave show of coins would really amount only to a fraction of his needs if counted in pounds; but cloaking more feeling than he would confess to, in a rough manner he said, 'Put it back! Put it back, Gracie. I'd deserve to be whupped naked up and down the country if I touched a penny on't. And look you here, Mr. Davis, it's the workhouse, if you like.'

The money-lender was about to say something in reply, when he was interrupted by the shaggy yokel who had driven the cart,

and who, having now walked up to the group after a long stare in which impudence and curiosity were blended, now exclaimed, 'Dash my buttons!' in a voice that drew the attention of the whole company. Then addressing Gracie in a tone of rough ironic raillery, he said, 'I always telled you it was a fair waste o' candles, Gracie, burnin' and burnin' them at the end window as if for the last thirty years and mair the bairn had been wannerin' about the bogs and hills. Lord! here he is, and I'll wager you dinna ken him!'

The slow-witted old woman sat staring in stupid surprise, and her companion, turning to the farmer, said, 'She's donnart, but you mind her lad had a scar on his neck. Look, there it is as plain as a tarry cross on a sheep's back. Oh, you needna hide it,' for the man had almost involuntarily made a motion to pull up the collar of his coat.

'It's all a lie,' cried the money-lender, losing his ordinary composure; and the old woman too, recovering from her surprise, said, 'Did you think you knew him better than his own mother, Wat? The laddie 'll be a yald young man now, but no so far on in years as this gentleman, and he was a bonny bairn. You're only makin' fun o' the awd bondager.'

But Wat stuck to his point, and planting himself at the door of the summer-house to prevent the money-lender from carrying out a very obvious intention to retire, related what he knew of him. His account may be condensed into a few sentences. In his roving youth he had been thrown into the society of many questionable characters for whose plunder Davis, during his early connection with the pawnshop, had acted as 'fence.' Thus he had known him in later years than any of his neighbours, and, as he said, would have recognised him at once but for the change of names which had puzzled him for a moment. 'I'm no the man to turn tale-pyet,' he ended, 'but I ken them could lay Jock Nesbit in quod any day.' Then he whispered to Mat, 'Let's get the hinds and dip him in the horse-pond.'

The farmer, however, would not listen to this proposal, but even pushed the carter aside as he tried to obstruct Nesbit, or Davis, who, with a hideous attempt to smile, turned to go away with the excuse that he had a call to make elsewhere. 'And you, my friend,' he said, addressing his accuser, 'have made a sad mistake; but you seem very poor, and if a few shillings—or even a pound,' fumbling in his pocket—but Wat told him scornfully 'to keep his dirty

money, only if he troubled Mat Elliot further he would have his hand in the pie whatever it cost.'

Glad to get off so easy, the money-lender replied, as he hurried off, 'Certainly he had never meant to harass Mr. Elliot, and would take the money just when it was convenient,' and he gave the horse-pond a wide berth, for the man looked as if he would enjoy pushing him in. 'He never said gome to his own mother,' the honest carter indignantly exclaimed as the gig drove off.

As to Grace, she was mechanically replacing her money in the two little bags, and she was very quiet all the way home, but the curious thing was that she rose next morning with the conviction that the proceedings of the day before had either been only part of a bad dream, or a cantrip of Watty's. The hopes and thoughts of a lifetime soon reasserted themselves, and when I saw her long afterwards in her green lichened wayside cottage, she still kept a light burning all night, at the end window, and on my asking why, replied in a voice grown plaintive with age, 'Div you no ken it's for the laddie? He went away when he was fowerteen, my dear, and I'm sure he'll come back if it's only to put his mother i' the mools. And the things I've made, and the stockin's I've knitted are a' kept for him, hinny. There wasna a bonnier bairn in the parish, and he'll be a yald young man now. Wat fair gliffed me yince wi' sayin' an awd skinney man frae the sooth was him; but it was desht his joky way. So the laddie's sure to come back, and if there's only ae light burnin' he'll ken it's his mother's.'

P. ANDERSON GRAHAM.

## *A Dream of Dead Gods.*

ONCE from the unplumbed deeps of a dream my soul went forth  
Through a sky that flickered and flashed with the gleam of  
the Northern Lights;

I followed their flame afar to the ultimate, desolate North,  
And the cry of the ships came up from seas that the Frost  
King smites.

The long white lines of the swans went past with clamour and  
clang,

Winging their way to the South, to the sun, and the open sea;  
With the crash of the grinding bergs the clear air echoing rang,  
And I shouted aloud, and my voice came back through the  
night to me.

I knew that I was alone—a soul in the soulless void,  
And fear took hold of my heart, for the great stars shone like  
eyes.

Space that fastened and fettered, and Time that despoiled and  
destroyed,

Became as a tale that is told to quiet a child who cries.

I looked, and behold a land! a pleasant land and a fair,

Shut in by mighty walls of ice and eternal snow;

And I knew that the vanished gods who are names to us still were  
there,

And the gods whom our fathers' fathers forgot in the long ago.

Never about that land comes darkness or voice of sorrow,

But a tumult of godlike laughter, of music and feasting and  
song;

No ghost of regret is there, nor dread of an unknown morrow

Where the gods, cast out and forgotten, remember and wait and  
are strong.

Remember! Ay, they remember, for the dust of the days that  
are past,

And the formless mists of the years to be, in their eyes are one.  
Knowing not hope nor fear, but knowing the first and the last,  
Man cannot think them. Can man look full at the noonday  
sun?

Their laughter fell like a scourge of steel on my naked soul,  
And I turned and fled through the darkness, under the blazing  
stars:

The red Earth spun beneath, and I heard the great seas roll,  
Prayer and weeping and music, and the din of winds and of wars.

So I came back, through the deeps of dream, from the place of  
wonder,  
To tarry awhile among men who deem that the gods are dead.  
Will kind Death call my soul ere the white walls fall asunder,  
And the green world shakes again at the ring of the high gods'  
tread?

Will the gods come back to the Earth when the Power that  
fashioned the gods

Breathes on the great ice rampart that holds them apart from  
men?

Will they scourge us with scorpions then, whose fathers were  
beaten with rods?

Will the flame of their cruel beauty flash out on the world again?

Only this I know—I have seen the light of their faces,

The light that flares and flames where the Northern stars grow  
pale;

I have passed by the path of the swans through dim and desolate  
places,

To the land where light and laughter faint not, nor ever shall  
fail.

DUNCAN J. ROBERTSON.



## *Flotsam.*<sup>1</sup>

BY HENRY SETON MERRIMAN.

### CHAPTER IX.

#### THE GOOD ANGEL.

**M**Y dear Tom—Fred Marqueray will tell us when he comes.' The lady who propounded this comfortable anticipation was a person of some importance. She was a grey-haired lady of comfortable presence—a pleasant, sweet, wholesome woman of the world, who knew what life was, and had come through it with a pure heart. A great lady this, of long lineage, with a title of her own of which she was less proud than of that which her husband had given her.

Sir Thomas Leaguer, K.C.B. and other things, crossed his dapper legs one over the other, and smiled grimly beneath his shaggy eyebrows. Sir Thomas was not a large man, but upright and square, with the keenest glance in the world. A small brown face, fierce eyebrows, a fierce grey moustache, and a pair of glittering blue eyes—a soldier—the son of many soldiers; such was the physical presence of Colonel Sir Thomas Leaguer. And his moral presence was uprightness, an unflinching courage, a deep insight, and a most perfect comprehension of discipline.

This was Harry Wylam's new Colonel—a man of the quality that has brought a certain small island of the north to the front rank of the nations.

'Yes,' he said, with a movement of the moustache, which the lady knew to indicate a smile. 'Marqueray will know.'

He glanced at the clock. It was five minutes to six.

'At three minutes to—— he will arrive,' said Lady Leaguer, who had seen the glance. The Colonel gave a little grunt, and turned to the open window of the drawing-room in which they

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in the United States, 1896, by Longmans, Green, & Co.

sat. They were dressed for dinner, which meal was to be served at six o'clock.

At four minutes to six the sound of wheels made the lady look up with a little smile, at which the Colonel nodded in his thoughtful way.

A smart buggy flashed past the window; a minute later the door opened, and at three minutes to six Fred Marqueray came into the room without haste.

Marqueray, junior captain in the regiment, was a man of twenty-eight, who looked older. A heavy moustache covered his lips, and his eyes were without expression. To be more correct, they were eyes with one permanent expression. The face was brown, and sphinxlike in its implacable repose—a hard nut for physiognomists to crack. The permanent expression of the eyes was that of quiet observation; of observations made from the summit of an impregnable height, for the face beneath betrayed nothing.

He shook hands in silence. When he held the great lady's fingers, he gave a little bow. It was obvious that these were old friends.

'Before you came,' said the lady, 'I was telling the Colonel that you would be sure to know something of the new subaltern.'

She spoke as she passed into the dining-room on his arm, the Colonel following alone. She glanced at her companion's face, and had hardly to raise her eyes to do so, for she was tall, and of a queenly carriage.

'What little I know,' replied Marqueray, 'is now, as ever, at your service.'

And the Colonel laughed suddenly.

'A very deep well,' commented her ladyship as she arranged the folds of her skirt, 'with truth at the bottom, of a certainty, but it never comes to the top unless it be hauled up by curiosity.'

The remark called for no reply.

'If there is a man in the Indian Army who can keep his own counsel that man is Frederic Marqueray,' the Colonel, himself occupying an unique position in that force, had once said. European and Native soldiers had fallen into the habit of speaking of this man as of one destined to greatness—they knew not why. In the strange lull that had fallen over India at this time men were fearful of their neighbours—looking askance at such as held their tongues, distrusting those who chattered.

'Have you seen him?' asked the Colonel, without looking up.

'Yes, I saw him on board his ship in the river. I went to meet him as you suggested. There were a number of people, and before I had an opportunity of introducing myself he hurried off with Mr. Phillip Lamond.'

'The man with the daughter,' said Lady Leaguer.

'Yes,' answered Marqueray, looking at her with expressionless eyes. 'The man with the daughter.'

'Ah! I have no doubt you admire her as much as the rest of them.'

'I am her slave,' returned Marqueray, gravely.

'I am sorry Mr. Phillip Lamond has got hold of Wylam,' said the Colonel, grimly sipping his iced champagne.

'And yet you know nothing against him,' put in Lady Leaguer.

The Colonel pushed forward his moustache and shrugged his shoulders. His wife looked at him with her smiling eyes. Then she turned to Marqueray, who shrugged his shoulders in imitation of his chief.

'There seems to be some magic in the name of Lamond,' said her ladyship, lightly setting the subject aside, 'I have noticed that it usually reduces the men in the room to silence. But tell me something of Mr. Wylam's appearance. I shall be obliged if you will cast his horoscope.'

Marqueray looked up with his slow grave smile.

'He is tall,' he answered, 'and fair, blue eyes and wavy hair; the young man in the book who captivates the hearts of the fair and goes generally to the dogs.'

'In books,' put in her ladyship, who knew that world which is not of books but of daily life.

'He has the grand air,' went on Marqueray, who himself possessed the grander air, which, borrowing nothing from swagger, hovers round the man of brains who has a purpose in life. 'He carries his head so high that he will never know what is beneath his feet. We shall all like him, and we shall probably have trouble with him.'

The lady classified each item with a little nod of her head. 'Did he see you?' she asked.

'No,' answered Marqueray, with a smile. He was as different from Harry as one man could be from another. Wherever Harry Wylam went he was seen and heard; his presence was never overlooked. Fred Marqueray, on the contrary, seemed to move through

the world on smooth running wheels. He never pushed his way in as did Harry, with a laugh and a word for everybody, seen of everybody, known of everybody. He never called the public attention to himself by a display of that superabundant vitality which marked Harry's presence.

'Did Mr. Phillip Lamond see you?' asked the Colonel, in the curt way which had earned for him the reputation of the sternest commander in the Bengal Army.

'I imagine so, because he never looked at me.'

There was a little pause, only broken by the sigh of the swinging punkah.

'I am afraid,' said the Colonel, 'that Wylam is not the sort of man we want in India'—he paused, glancing up and noting that the servants had momentarily left the room—'just now.'

Across the table the eyes of the two men met for an instant, and it would be hard to say whether the lady intercepted the glance or not.

'He will, I imagine,' said Marqueray, gravely fingering some crumbs, 'be a—social acquisition. He seems prepared to like everybody, and we all like being liked.'

'Question is,' said the Colonel, grimly, 'whether he will get on in this country.'

'I think not,' said Marqueray, after a pause, in his gentle way. 'He has money, and I should imagine that he is possessed of a very keen taste for enjoyment; bad things in India.'

'Well,' said Lady Leaguer, cheerfully, 'we must all combine to make a stand against the temptations that will beset the young man's footsteps. We shall count on you, Fred—you know there is nothing the Colonel dislikes so much as that one of his subalterns should journey towards——'

'The dogs,' supplemented her husband.

And her ladyship nodded.

Presently she looked across the table towards her guest.

'It seems to me,' she said, 'that you know a good deal of Mr. Wylam; too much to have been acquired in a passing glimpse as he climbed down a ship's side.'

'Yes,' admitted Marqueray, 'I have heard about him from home.'

'Nothing to his good, I'll warrant,' said the Colonel.

Marqueray nodded.

'That is why I have forgotten it,' he said, quietly.

Then they fell to talking of home affairs, as exiles love to do,

and for a time Harry Wylam and his prospects were laid aside. The Colonel had consented to the exchange, which brought young Wylam into his regiment, chiefly because the name was one of pleasant associations. Harry Wylam's father and this grizzled warrior had been young men together in the early days of annexation, when the Company was growing so rapidly that the whole world seemed to stand watching in surprise.

He had, of course, heard of Harry's quarrel and the subsequent duel with Captain Montague, and had set down the whole affair to a fiery nature which could easily have been inherited. In the days when Colonel Leaguer had known Harry's father duelling was not rare in England, and was common enough in India. During the Colonel's career the practice of thus summarily settling the quarrels which must arise where youth and ambition meet had gradually died out, and with it the decadence of the English officer in India had set in. It is not, of course, to be concluded that the one was the natural consequence of the other, although any practice tending to lower the manhood of Europeans in India cannot be too strictly avoided.

Sir Thomas Leaguer belonged to the old school of Anglo-Indian, in so much as he held to the doctrine that the line of racial demarcation can hardly be drawn too firmly. But he belonged to the newer and better school now ruling our Eastern Empire, in that he deemed that line to be a simple practical fact, capable of demonstration every time the Asiatic and the European might come into competition. It seems certain that climate and the hundred subtle influences of daily example had tended to degenerate men of our race living in India at the time of Harry Wylam's return to that country, and it is equally sure that leaders of such material as Colonel Sir Thomas Leaguer were alive to this degeneration.

The Colonel thought no worse of Harry because he had revived a dying custom, and that so effectually. In fact, the scrape evinced the presence in the young soldier of that manliness and energy which appeared to be dormant in the Anglo-Indian officers at this period. That the manliness and energy were to wake up later and leave such a mark on the Asiatic race as will never be wiped out through all time we know now, but Colonel Leaguer never suspected it at this time.

The trio around the Colonel's table had plenty of news from home to discuss without further dwelling upon the smaller events of Calcutta life.

Each mail was heavy with news from Europe, where, indeed,

the war-cloud was black enough. Lady Leaguer—herself a soldier's daughter—had long learnt to take the change and chance of military life with that unquestioning obedience to discipline which is as good a stimulant as fatalism, and infinitely better suited to the mind of educated men.

England had been at peace for forty years. She had, of course, been engaged in those small colonial wars against savage or semi-barbarous neighbours—the small frontier campaigns—which form such an excellent military school, and keep alive that taste for battle by which we have won our position in the world. But a great war against European troops had seemed at this time almost a thing of the past. Some, indeed, deemed such warfare at an end for ever.

And suddenly there arose a cloud in the East, on the border of that northern empire with which the world has yet to reckon. Russia had grown within the passage of a few generations from a small inland state to a vast empire, with such outlets to the sea as will when her railways are developed raise her to commercial supremacy in the world.

The work of one of the greatest women this planet has ever known—Catherine the Second—had borne fuller harvest than her wildest dream could have foreseen. Russia was beginning to awake and stretch herself. She reached out one hand towards Constantinople, and lo! the British Lion, asleep these forty years, must needs get up and roar.

There are times when the world seems strangely disturbed—when nations are the playthings of Fate, and man is but grass that is cut down in the morning. Such a time as this had dawned with the year 1854, when Harry Wylam, who had breathed a prayer over his virgin sword that England might have many wars, set sail for India.

Strange passions—national passions, which compare with the rage of a man as a thunderstorm compares to a sneeze—were bestirring themselves in the hearts of people hitherto peaceful. Nations were about to arise, impelled by some command that came they knew not whence, to go down to the fighting places of the universe, and there to challenge Fortune.

In England the war was popular. We are shopkeepers—my masters. Let us admit that. But at times we have a way of laying aside our apron and our bill-books, our yard-measure and our scales. We put up the shutters and lock the door—and then there is usually the devil to pay.

In eighteen hundred and fifty-four such a time as this came to our country, and far away in Calcutta—within a stone's throw of that river which has witnessed the greatest disaster our race has known—two men sniffed the battle wind and talked together of those things which they saw upon the horizon.

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## CHAPTER X.

## ON THE SLOPE.

'HOLLOA! Here's old Marks!'

And Master Harry Wylam steadied himself with an effort in front of the long-chair in the verandah of the old Calcutta Field Club.

The rest of the party, engaged as they had been at cards, came to the open window and looked at Marqueray—some of them held long glasses in their hands, and the clink of ice against the rim of these told a tale at every moment. It was nearly midnight. Other revellers still held their cards between unsteady fingers. They had come out for a breath of air, and in the verandah Harry—excited, a little flustered by heavy play, a little heated by many potations—found his friend Marqueray.

Marqueray, it would appear, had been sitting there some time alone—with his thoughts and a cigar. Coming out by another window, he had apparently sat down to watch the fire-flies flit in and out among the heavy branches of the Dalmatian cotton trees. The great compound of the Field Club was deserted and still. Below the verandah—at the corner of the kennels—that grave mendicant, the adjutant bird, stood grimly sleeping off the effects of his last heavy meal. For he was a pet at the club, and stood expectant below the windows all day long. The furtive shuffle of a prowling jackal, paying his nocturnal visit to the kitchen refuse-heap, had been the only sound from without, while through the open windows the alternate hush and clamour of voices, which is the unmistakable token of high play, came muffled from the card-room.

'Old Marks, sitting out here with the punkah-wallah,' said Harry, with a laugh. 'You're the d—dest, rummest old fish that ever I've come across! Why don't you come in and have a go at the cards? Believe you've been asleep—*know* the punkah-wallah has, d—n him,'



He turned to the silent native servant in his white clothes and red-leather belt—a shadowy form crouching against the wall, pulling mechanically at the punkah-rope with one hand—the rest of him was, indeed, asleep. The right arm was a machine.

‘Do you hear, you black scum of the earth? You’ve been asleep. Wake up!’

He poured half a tumbler of iced brandy and soda over him, and Marqueray at the same moment reached out his left foot and sent the glass spinning to the far end of the verandah.

‘Don’t make an ass of yourself, Wylam,’ he said quietly—and in the same breath said something in Hindustanee to the servant, who had leapt with flashing eyes to his feet.

There was something in the man’s attitude that made Harry turn half threateningly, and glance at him over his shoulder.

‘Eh?’ he said inquiringly. ‘What is the man saying?’

‘Nothing,’ answered Marqueray, speaking quickly to the servant in Hindustanee, which Harry knew very imperfectly, although two years had elapsed since his arrival in India. ‘The poor devil was half asleep.’

Harry was still laughing at his own excellent practical joke, and his companions grouped in the window were ready enough to join in his merriment. They had been winning his money.

‘He’s only a nigger—d——n it,’ said Harry, swaggering towards the card-room, while the servant with a little shiver resumed his place at the punkah-cord.

‘That’s all!’ admitted Marqueray, glancing sideways at the man under cover of a cloud of smoke. The moon was nearly full—a glorious, yellow Indian moon. It was almost as light as an English winter day when the clouds are low.

Harry went back into the room.

‘The best of old Marqueray is,’ he said as he resumed his seat, ‘that he never preaches. He was in a devilish rage with me then—quite suddenly—I don’t know why. Did the punkah-wallah a lot of good I should think—freshened him up—ha! ha! Poor devil, it must have startled him though.’

Harry paused—a heap of rupees lay on the table in front of him. He took up one at random—pushed back his chair, rose and went to the window. ‘Here, gye hye, catch!’ he shouted, and threw the coin to the man who sat crouching against the wall.

Marqueray seemed to have gone to sleep again. The servant looked towards him with gleaming eyes. The coin had rattled

on the stone floor. It lay close to the mat on which the punkah-wallah sat. The man stretched out his slim, nervous hand.

Marquerry was apparently asleep, and the coin whizzed away into the long grass followed by a curse.

Harry Wylam had been two years in India, and in that time had naturally drifted into a 'set,' of which social division our Eastern Empire is the natural home. Harry's set was at this moment in the card-room of the old Field Club, and Fred Marquerry, a member of the club, did not belong to it.

Harry began his sojourn in Calcutta by daily reviling what he was pleased to call his luck, to which vague influence he attributed the loss of such opportunities of promotion as were provided by the Crimean War. At the beginning also he wrote long letters home to his guardian and longer effusions to Miriam, who treasured them up as women do. In his letters to Miriam he boldly made confession of his love in such halting phrase as he had at his command, and Mr. Gresham, with a fine old-fashioned sense of honour and fair-play, never asked his daughter to show him these epistles.

In reply Mr. Gresham wrote sturdy commercial communications, consisting largely of an enumeration of dates of despatch and receipt of former correspondence, a little news, a little advice; and a great affection peeping out between the lines. Miriam penned stiff little letters, giving in a running calligraphy all the small news of St. Helen's Place, an account of the Christmas decoration of St. Helen's Church, a nervous synopsis of the war-like news from Russia, and never a word of love. That which she had to say on the subject she doubtless deemed too sacred to commit to a letter which might fall into the wrong hands in the hazards of a long voyage. Or perhaps she had no words to tell him of that which was within her faithful heart. It is not always the best love that expresses itself in the choicest language.

After a few months, however, Harry found himself more absorbed in his immediate environments, and less interested in such far-off matters as were treated of in his letters from home. Never a good correspondent, he began to find it difficult to make time to write. He played polo, attended race meetings, was a great favourite in social circles, and finally his Colonel forced him to attend to his military duties.

'Don't know how the devil it is,' he was wont to say, 'but all the hard work seems to come my way.'

And Marqueray at such time would smile his grave smile, and reply that it was very good for Harry.

For both the Colonel and Harry's captain had tamed a young horse in their time, and knew the beneficial effect of hard work upon a fiery spirit.

The military duties, however, came last, and it was not to these that Harry could attribute his lack of time for letter-writing.

Now, at the end of two years, each mail continued to bring him a letter from one or the other of his faithful correspondents in St. Helen's Place, while three out of four homeward despatches left for London without a scratch from Harry's pen. He was quite absorbed in the self-indulgent, excitement-seeking life of a subaltern whose duties towards the regiment were performed by his native double—the Jemmadar. Each captain had his native *remplaçant* the Soubahdar—even the European Colonel possessed a double in the shape of the Soubahdar Major. The native regiments, officered by Europeans, were complete without their white chiefs—ready for action, officered, disciplined.

It was assuredly no wonder that such men as Frederic Marqueray and Colonel Leaguer should go about their business at this time with grave faces.

'If he is going to the devil,' Marqueray had said of Harry to the Colonel, 'he must go. We hav'n't time to stop him.'

And, indeed, they had other matters to attend to. Marqueray was not always at home. He had of late developed a taste for sport, and was for ever vanishing from the busy social life of the city to some forest fastness in search of big game. After he came back he seemed always to have much to tell the Colonel, for these two remained closeted together for hours.

From such an expedition as this Marqueray had returned this evening, graver than ever. His silent ways, his long, quiet face contributed so little to the merriment of others that he was never missed from club or mess-room when the misanthropic humour happened to be upon him. He had come straight from the Colonel's house to the Field Club, and took, as we have seen, his post unobserved and unobtrusive, on the verandah without the room where Harry was playing away the remnant of a handsome fortune.

The punkah-wallah tugged mechanically at his rope, his deep inscrutable eyes half-closed in a reverie such as only Orientals know. It seemed a part of the glowing, motionless Indian night.

A few yards away Marqueray, in a reverie almost as deep,

pondered on the stillness that was over India. Once he turned and looked steadily through the darkness at the white figure crouching against the wall. But he did not speak. He knew, better perhaps than any man in Calcutta, the depth, the utter impenetrability of Oriental silence. Few Europeans knew so much of Brahmin and Mohammedan as Fred Marqueray; few had studied the thousand intricacies of caste and religion; few had attained to such a knowledge of the native character. He spoke their tongues as one of themselves—he had passed among them a thousand times as one of them. He was recalled to himself by a light footstep, and looked up.

Phillip Lamond stood before him.

‘Harry Wylam here?’ he asked shortly.

‘Yes,’ answered Marqueray, with a jerk of the head towards the open window. ‘In there.’

‘Playing?’

‘Yes.’

Phillip Lamond made a step towards the window from where the clink of silver came to their ears and stopped.

‘He’s ruining himself,’ he said to Marqueray. ‘Do you know that?’

‘Yes.’

Marqueray looked up. Lamond looked down. The shifty eyes, with their indifferent smile, met the persistent gaze of quiet observation.

‘I’ll tell you what it is, Captain Marqueray,’ said Lamond with unusual emphasis, ‘we must put a stop to it somehow. That fellow is on the high road to ruin—going to the devil at a pace only attained in this country. I know it, because I have had the management of his affairs since he was a baby.’

‘Indeed,’ said Marqueray indifferently.

‘Yes,’ Lamond paused with a vague smile, ‘and a very fair fortune he possessed when he landed in this city two years ago. Got a bit of property up Delhi way. I remitted the proceeds home to his guardian—shrewd old business man—not quite a gentleman, you know, but honest.’

‘Same thing,’ said Marqueray.

‘Yes—ha, ha! of course. Well, sir, Harry Wylam’s squandered all his savings, and now it is a question of selling some of the property. It’s slipping through his fingers. Listen, you can hear it.’

And, indeed, in the silence of the night they could hear the silver pieces changing hands.

'Well,' said Lamond, 'I'm off home—early man myself. I wish you would help though, Marqueray. He's a bit of a handful, Master Harry, for an old chap. Well, will you?'

'Yes,' answered Marqueray, 'I will.'

'Thanks. Just look after him a bit, you know.'

'Yes. Good night.'

Lamond went down the narrow steps, across the moonlit grass, and disappeared in the shadow of the trees.

'What's your game, I wonder?' said Marqueray, rising and stretching himself. He stood for a moment, a lean, strong figure in a white mess uniform, and then sauntered into the card-room.

'Wylam,' he said, 'I want to walk home with you. Nearly finished?'

'Yes,' cried Harry, with an oath as he threw down his cards. 'I've had enough of this. Luck is dead against me.'

He rose, paid his losses, and followed Marqueray out of the room.

'Are you going to marry Lamond's daughter?' asked Marqueray when they were walking down the avenue of cotton-trees.

'No,' answered Harry with a gay laugh. 'Are you?'

'No, thank you,' said Marqueray quietly. 'But if you do not mean to marry her, I should be rather careful. She is devilish pretty.'

Harry laughed—the somewhat fatuous laugh of a man of the world of twenty-three.

'Oh, I'm all right. You need not be anxious about me, you straight-laced old badger. There is nobody out here likely to interfere with my peace of mind.'

'Oh!' muttered Marqueray.

'No,' went on Harry, who was excited and loquacious; 'I left all that behind me in England. Engaged, you know.'

'Ah!'

'Oh, yes; have been all along. But I kept it dark—devilish dark.'

'Devilish!' admitted Marqueray, dryly. 'And the card-playing, and the betting, and the playing ducks and drakes with your money—is all that approved of at home?'

Harry walked along in silence for some time. Then suddenly he stopped.

'You're right, old chap!' he exclaimed penitently. 'By Jove,

I'm a blackguard! I'll never touch a card again, by Jove I won't! I mean——'

'I shouldn't, if I were you,' interrupted Marqueray, walking on.

'Well, I've done with play—that's settled,' said Harry. 'And as for Maria—she's all right. She knows, you know. I dine there to-morrow evening. Come in after dinner, and see for yourself.'

'I will. Here we are at your quarters. Good night!'

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## CHAPTER XI.

### AMONG FRIENDS.

COMBINED with that sense of refinement ever imparted to a house by a woman's daily presence, there existed in the atmosphere of Phillip Lamond's bungalow by the Hooghly a certain pleasant sense of Bohemianism. It would be hard to say whether this lingered in the curtains and the furniture in the form of a slight odour of tobacco-smoke, or found its source in a subtle laxity of thought and personal habit enjoyed by the master of the house.

'This is Liberty Hall, you know,' Lamond was wont to say, with his tolerant smile and a shrug of the shoulders, as if to ask who *he* was that he should rail at the weaknesses of his fellow-mortals. 'Liberty Hall. You smoke when and where you like. You drink whatever you can get, and you have merely to ask for anything there is in the house.'

'This is Liberty Hall, you know,' he said to Harry at dessert the following evening. 'Light up whenever you feel inclined—Maria doesn't mind, among friends. Do you, my dear?'

And Maria murmured, 'Of course not,' and cast down her eyes, after raising them once to Harry's face in a manner which, in one less naïve and modest, one might almost have suspected of conveying a hint that to the bold and enterprising the privileges of Liberty Hall did not stop at a cigar.

'Not I!' cried Harry, in his jolliest humour; 'it's only when the ladies are not there that I need to smoke—ha! ha!'

The repast had been brisk and merry enough; for where Harry was there never lacked laughter and gaiety, and, indeed,

Maria had a pretty wit of her own. The viands had been choice, the wine red, and Harry, we may be sure, not afraid to look upon it.

'Fill up, my boy!' Lamond had said half-a-dozen times since the servants had retired. 'It will do you no harm.'

The table was tastefully decorated with flowers, discreetly lighted by shaded candles. The punkah worked smoothly, and there was a gentle breeze from the river which, Maria complained, fluttered one's hair. This was strictly true, as she proved a hundred times with pretty arms upraised and snowy fingers skirmishing over raven curls.

'Then,' she said in reply to Harry's protest, 'I shall be forced to go, because I know papa wants his cigar.'

It was somehow conveyed to Harry that she did not want to go, and at last he yielded—as who would not have done?—to so gentle and kind a desire to make himself at home.

'We must try and persuade him to content himself with a little music and a quiet evening,' said Lamond to his daughter meaningly. 'Dull work, I am afraid, after the high play we have heard of.'

Maria gave a hopeless little sigh, as if to indicate the fear that no charm or effort of hers could be expected to compete with the fascinations of the gaming table.

'Ah,' said Harry, with a passing gravity, 'I've given up cards. Gave them up last night. Old Marqueray took me in hand. Decent old fellow, Marqueray—you know him, Maria.'

'Yes,' answered Maria demurely, 'I have met him.'

'Well, we walked home together last night, and he persuaded me to turn over a new leaf.'

'Ah, but it will flutter back again,' put in Maria archly, and yet with a grave face and reproving lips.

'Not it!' cried Harry. 'No—I have turned it over in earnest this time.'

'And very glad I am to hear it,' said Lamond. 'Another week or so of such work, and you would have been a ruined man, I verily believe. No property could stand such a drain upon it—'

'I know—I know,' interrupted Harry. 'Come, Lamond, don't pull such a long face. I'll go into the accounts with you some day. In the meantime you've sold, haven't you?'

'Yes—in a bad market. There's a funny feeling abroad in the country. No one wants to buy land.'



'Ah,' answered Harry, in his grand, heedless way, 'more fools they. It is good land.'

But Phillip Lamond was not listening. He had turned his head to the open window, where the lights of Garden Reach flickered across the river.

'Thought I heard wheels,' he exclaimed.

At the same moment the door was opened, and the butler announced, 'Marqueray, sahib.'

'You,' said Lamond, rising and holding out his hand with an indifferent smile.

'Yes; come to look after Wylam,' answered Marqueray, with a pleasant laugh, which was not communicated to his grave observant eyes.

He shook hands with Maria and accorded to her, as to all women, his stiff little bow. He exchanged a nod with Harry, and straightway accepted the chair brought forward by the butler. There was something soldier-like and straightforward in his manner of occupying this position without so much as the usual social untruth.

'We shall have a north-easter to-night,' he said, calmly. 'There is a cold edge on the wind. Do you feel them much down here?'

He addressed himself to Lamond, and Maria, as if to verify his statement, rose and went to the open window, where Harry presently joined her, engaged also upon meteorological questions. From the window it was literally but one step to the verandah; from the verandah to the quiet compound, bordered by the river, was only another. Marqueray and Lamond were soon left alone.

'Our friend,' said Lamond, in his leisurely way—half interested in his cigar—'has turned over a new leaf very quickly. He has just told us that he has given up play.'

Marqueray nodded.

'Yes'—he pulled out his watch and looked at it—'twenty hours ago,' he added, without comment.

Phillip Lamond knew very little of Marqueray, and of that modicum he was afraid. They had met in the arena of life where men encounter each other and nod; where they pause and exchange the time of day, but never know each other's women-folk. This was the first time that Marqueray had called at the bungalow, although he had met both father and daughter elsewhere.

'I am very glad,' went on Lamond lazily, ignoring the irony, 'that you have succeeded so promptly. I feel more or less responsible for the lad, although I have no authority over him. What are you drinking? Port; turn that up and we'll have a fresh bottle. You see, the chap's been going the pace to such an extent during these last two years that he has little or nothing left.'

'He is easily led,' said Marqueray, looking out of the window.

Lamond followed the direction of his glance. Among the shadowy banana trees, between the stems of the palms—a white dress fluttered.

'Yes,' said Lamond, with his usual engaging frankness, 'and to tell you the truth my hands have been rather tied. An old chap like me, with a motherless girl, cannot be too careful. I don't want Maria talked about. What I say is that a girl's name must be kept out of the gossips' mouths at any cost. Suppose I had showed an interest in Harry when he first came over—when he was known to be wealthy—when he seemed to have every chance of a brilliant future! What would people have said? Why, that I wanted him for Maria.'

Mr. Lamond paused, with his slim white hand outstretched, his pleasant smile, his engaging innocence of manner. He seemed to lightly draw aside the curtain of his heart, and to say in action if not in words: 'There, my dear Marqueray, you can see right through me!'

'You see,' he went on, 'they do not know what *we* know.'

'And what do *we* know?' inquired Captain Marqueray, calmly.

'Why—about that little girl at home—Miss Gresham.'

'Ah! yes,' replied Marqueray, again looking out of the window towards the mango-grove.

'But now,' went on Maria's father confidentially, 'that the boy is anything but a catch, penniless, and eh—er—not thought very much of in the service, I suppose, I think gossips cannot have much to say.'

'And you are enabled to exercise your parental authority and foresight,' concluded Marqueray, looking at the end of the cigar which he had just lighted.

'Yes,' admitted Lamond, rather doubtfully, for it seemed to him that his hearer was slow of comprehension. 'And at the same time I am glad to have an opportunity of thanking you, and Colonel Leagner too, as far as that goes, for your kind efforts to keep Harry straight. Believe me, I have been fully aware of your

good influence over the boy. At one time I quite hoped that he would develop into a first-class officer, like the Colonel and yourself, but now he seems to have got into the other set—the set that is letting the native service go to the devil.’

Lamond’s light grey eyes were watching Marqueray’s face.

‘India is a very easy country to go to the devil in,’ said the soldier pleasantly. ‘Wylam is young yet. I dare say he will get over this present phase of Anglo-Indian life. He has the making of a good soldier, but he is lazy, and won’t learn the languages.’

The light grey eyes shifted elsewhere.

Marqueray turned again, and looked out of the window in time to see Harry and Maria pass slowly across the face of the river, where the reflections of the stars ran into silver rills. The young people were walking slowly. Harry was bending his head to say something, and across the stillness of the grass there came his jolly laugh.

‘You have a very charming daughter,’ said Marqueray.

‘And you think it rather dangerous,’ completed Lamond, ‘allowing her to wander about with our wild, impecunious young friend yonder.’

‘If you don’t want more to come of it, certainly.’

‘I hope my girl will do better for herself than a harum-scarum young subaltern of a native regiment,’ said Lamond; and, as if acting on the friendly hint, he went to the window and called the young people in.

‘We want you to sing to us, my dear,’ explained Lamond in his pleasant voice.

And as Maria stepped in between the curtains she cast a glance of dislike in the direction of the quiet, grey-haired man who had spoilt this friendly family party by so untimely a visit.

She led the way to the drawing-room, and there, with a queer spirit of perversity, set herself the task of fascinating Frederic Marqueray.

She sang to him and at him. She consulted him as to the reading of the song, as to the rendering of certain passages, and regarding the merits of the composers of the day.

And when Maria Lamond wished to please none could do so more effectually. Her pretty white fingers lingered on the tender passages of the accompaniment. She swayed a little as she sang. The music, it was obvious, moved her to the depths of her heart.

One so inexperienced had not yet learnt that such tender ware as a maiden's feelings must be guarded from the eye of the world.

At the beginning it was Harry who turned the pages of her music, but later—no one knew exactly how—the pleasant task fell to Marqueray.

'Are you fond of music?' she asked her new attendant slave between two songs. 'Does Lady Leaguer sing?'

'No, not now,' answered Marqueray, who perhaps knew that when a woman asks two questions at once it is the latter that must be answered.

'You see a great deal of them, do you not?'

'Yes; they are very kind to me.'

He was placing a new song on the music-stand, and, turning, looked down at her with a quiet smile, which somehow had the effect of stopping a flow of questions on the sayings and doings of that world of which Maria was not.

'They have been very kind to Harry also,' she said. 'I suppose Lady Leaguer is a sort of mother to you all?'

'Precisely.'

'He is always raving about her. She seems . . . clever.'

'She is . . . clever.'

Maria looked up quickly. Marqueray was studying the score after the manner of one who, knowing no music, wishes to make sure of turning over the page at the right moment.

'Does the scent of these flowers trouble you?' asked Maria, suddenly changing the subject. She was referring to a spray of heliotrope, which she proceeded to remove from the front of her white dress. The attitude was a pretty one, and the operation by no means hurried. When at last the flowers were released she looked up with a quick side-long glance.

There was nowhere to lay the half-withered blossom. She handed it to him after a little movement of hesitation, which made the gift the more precious. She began the prelude. She had, indeed, a musical touch, and her voice was full and rich.

While she sang Marqueray attached the flower to the button-hole of his coat. Harry was talking to Lamond by the open window, and seemed rather restless. At times he turned and looked towards the piano.

'You seemed to get on deucedly well with Maria,' he said rather sullenly, as he drove home in Marqueray's buggy afterwards.

'Deucedly,' answered Marqueray. 'She is not difficult to get on with.'

Nothing was said of the avowed object of Marqueray's visit: namely, to confirm Harry's statement that Maria knew all about Miriam Gresham at home in England. Indeed, Harry had not very much to say, and when they reached the sepoy lines went to his own quarters with a curt good-night.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### A CLOUD.

It is the custom of historians to dwell somewhat dramatically upon the gaieties, the balls, the givings in marriage, and the so-called heedlessness of a city or a country, to be plunged in the next chapter into the misery of war or pestilence or famine—or merely panic.

We do not blame the historian, nor do we grudge him his little stage trick of dramatic contrast. But what does he expect? Is the city to stand still? Would it do for a wine-country to neglect its vineyards, because there may be war in the land before the grapes are picked? Do we reproach the fair white clouds for sailing across the summer sky when the barometer is falling?

If, therefore, it is mentioned that the close of the cool season of 1857 in Calcutta was exceedingly like the close of the same period of 1856 or 1855, we point no moral, neither perhaps do we adorn a tale. We merely state a fact. The race-meetings at Chowringhee were over, the date of the last Bachelors' Ball, with which the season always closed, had arrived. And it happens to be with this ball that we have to do.

Colonel and Lady Leaguer were there. Frederic Marqueray's solemn presence was not wanting. Harry Wylam—the best dancer in Calcutta, the gayest of the gay, the favourite of men and women alike—was of course a steward. The Lamonds were there, for the first time. Harry had given Maria the tickets, and the worldly-wise no doubt suspected her priceless bouquet of coming from the same source. Maria's dark eyes flashed a bright welcome or a scornful semi-indifference, according to the sex of her friend, as she recognised here and there an acquaintance. Indeed, the change from the one expression to the other was

bewilderingly rapid. If some fellow-votary at the shrine of Venus possessed a pretty figure, Maria looked that shapely form up and down with an imperfectly concealed commiseration. If it happened that the hair of her rival was fair and soft she noted the dressing of the same with a pitiful little smile. Whether it happened to be face or figure, arm or hair, or merely dress, Maria seemed to discover at one glance the particular point upon which the possessor prided herself, and her glance disparaged it.

With regard to the other sex she was marvellously charitable, overlooking such natural blemishes of face, figure, or intelligence as Nature had bestowed upon them. The youngest subaltern fresh from home, blushing in boyish self-consciousness and an embarrassing inability to keep his hands still, received a firm but kind refusal of a dance with a smile so sweet that he went about for the rest of the evening puffed up with the conviction that he was secretly loved by a grown-up woman. The stoutest and most middle-aged civil servant, provided that he was single, was accorded a 'square,' with a respectful flutter so young and innocent, that he realised once more the fact that a young spark has no chance against a man of the world whenever the latter takes the trouble to compete.

The veriest booby of the Governor's staff found out again that a red-coat 'by gad' and a pair of spurs carry all before them with a woman.

And all the while she kept half her programme for Harry, and only encroached on that youth's reservation when Frederic Marqueray asked her for a dance.

'I have heard,' she said to him, 'that you dance even better than Harry.'

'Then, Miss Lamond, Sapphira must have told you so,' he answered, with the smile that she did not always understand.

He bowed, returned her engagement-card, and went towards Lady Leaguer, who was talking to Harry.

'I suppose,' that lady was saying to the wildest subaltern in the regiment that you have plenty of friends here. You are sure to——'

'Oh—yes, Lady Leaguer—got a lot of friends.'

'Be sure,' said that lady, slowly fanning herself and looking across the room to where Maria held her little court, 'be sure that they are all you think them.'

Harry laughed re-assuringly, as who would allay all anxiety on that score, and having paid his respects to the Colonel's lady

he bowed and withdrew, making room for Frederic Marqueray, who came up at this moment with his usual impassive leisureliness.

'Old Marks,' said Harry, in his impulsive way to his next partner, 'goes about the room like a native. Have you noticed it? He has caught their tricks. I believe if you dressed him up in a turban and a blanket no one could tell him from a nigger.'

Frederic Marqueray requested the honour of taking her ladyship down to supper later in the evening, which favour was accorded by the lady at once.

'Any news?' she asked almost immediately, with a little anxious look about the lips, which she was in the habit of showing to very few.

They were standing together at the end of the long room on a dais raised a few inches above the dancing floor. Marqueray looked out over the moving heads of the throng, and did not reply at once.

'Not yet,' he said at length.

'Where is the Colonel?' asked Lady Leaguer, with a sharp sigh. She did not look at her companion, but turned her face with a pleasant smile towards the dancers.

'He will be here presently. Don't be anxious. If there is a regiment that will stand it is ours.'

'They all say that,' put in the lady forebodingly.

'Yes, and they trust to kindness. We don't, we trust to fear,' said Marqueray grimly.

The lady raised her fan and turned slowly towards him. She looked at him with a sort of affection: for women who love are very tender towards those who reflect some of the loved one's attributes.

'You and Tom,' she said, 'are the hardest men in India.'

He turned and met the lady's affectionate glance. They might have been mother and son.

'There are the others,' he said; 'but we had better change the subject. It would not do to be overheard.'

Lady Leaguer gave a capable little nod.

'Then tell me,' she said, 'what object Mr. Lamond can have in marrying his daughter to a penniless subaltern like Harry Wylam. Do you know?'

'Not yet,' answered Marqueray, as someone came up and interrupted their conversation.

Harry and Maria had in truth disappeared. The room was



terribly hot, despite the huge swinging punkahs and the blocks of ice.

'One cannot breathe here,' Maria had said at the end of a waltz. She raised her pretty white shoulders in an exaggerated effort to inhale a breath of air, and looked up at Harry with a face surprisingly cool and composed.

'Deuced hot—let's go out,' ejaculated Harry, fanning her so furiously that her laces fluttered, and she had to set her hair in order.

On the threshold of the long window she paused.

'Ought we?' she asked, in little more than a whisper, pausing with a most engaging hesitation on the brink of an escapade so new and thrilling.

'Yes, come along,' answered her partner, urging her to follow by a movement of his arm, where after all her fingers rested of their own free will. In the youthful flutter of her perturbation she forgot, no doubt, that if she still had misgivings she had merely to release his sleeve.

The waning moon was lowering over some palm trees that bordered the large compound of the club house, where the bachelors gave their last ball of a memorable season. There is something especially moving to the human heart—provocative of the imagination—in the outline of a palm tree against a moonlit sky. A soft breath, blowing up from the sea—the shadow of a far-off sea-breeze—rustled among the small bamboos and stirred the leaves of the flowering shrubs. The air was scented as only Indian night-time is, with a thousand competing odours—each one disturbing in itself. The sound of the music came softly to those walking on the parched turf.

Maria cast a quick glance around. She perceived every point of vantage—like a good general who has selected his own battlefield.

She drew up her glove. With a queer little smile she arranged the flowers at her breast.

'I hope no one saw us come out,' she said.

'Why? Are you engaged for this dance?'

'Yes.'

'Is that why you hope that no one saw us come out?' asked Harry, who could play this game to perfection. And, indeed, Maria was marvellously pretty in her white dress—with a little flush on her cheeks—her eyes alight with excitement and resolution.

She would not, however, answer him, knowing that a small thing withheld magnifies its value with astonishing rapidity. She was looking about, and at last found a pleasant, secluded seat in the shade of a clump of jungle grass. Seated here she returned to the arrangement of the flowers at her breast. One blossom fell, and Harry immediately possessed himself of it—unreproved. Indeed, Maria did not appear to have perceived his impertinence.

‘Is that the reason,’ he repeated in such a low voice that he had perforce to go nearer, ‘that you hope we were not seen?’

Maria turned away and looked up at the palms—leaving, however, her hand not so very far from his. Her shell-like little ear, moreover, was still at his disposal.

‘Do you not want your next partner to find you? Is that it?’ asked Harry.

‘That *may* be it,’ she admitted at last, and the white shoulder, peeping above her frock, swayed—perhaps one inch—towards him.

Six thousand miles away Miriam, asleep in her little bed in St. Helen’s Place, and dreaming no doubt of Harry, perhaps turned restlessly at this moment.

In the meantime the Bachelors’ Ball was at its height; for those who dance on volcanoes may nevertheless foot it merrily enough while the music lasts.

Colonel Sir Thomas Leaguer had arrived, and the little anxious lines about the kind lips of Lady Leaguer took flight immediately. The Colonel made his way through the thronged rooms, a smart little man in his brilliant uniform—with keen eyes and a firm mouth beneath his great grey moustache. He knew everyone in the rooms, and in his curt way greeted them kindly enough.

‘No, my dear,’ he said to one pert miss who asked him playfully to accept her as a partner. ‘I am not going to dance with you. I am an old buffer, and you wouldn’t like it if I did.’

A courteous gentleman this—with that tact and knowledge of men and women which goes to make a great commander. Lady Leaguer—on the dais—watched her husband’s face, and knew that he had news, but not for the ears of the revellers. Frederic Marqueray was unobtrusively making his way from another point of the room towards the dais. They were rallying as it were beside her ladyship.

The Colonel nodded affectionately to his wife. He took his

stand beside her, and together they looked round upon the gay scene with smiles of approval and enjoyment.

'It has come,' said the Colonel under his breath.

'Where?' whispered his wife, and all the while she smiled.

'Meerut—where is Marqueray?'

'He is coming towards you—on your left.'

The Colonel exchanged a nod and a wave of the hand with a white-haired general officer, who passed towards the supper-room with a lady on his arm.

On his left he heard the clank of a sword. But he did not look round towards Marqueray, who was standing there studying his engagement card with a puzzled expression.

'Don't be anxious,' said Sir Thomas to his wife, 'I must go again at once. You get home quietly, about one o'clock. It is now nearly twelve. I shall be there soon after. They say it is a small local disturbance, but ——'

He paused and shrugged his shoulders.

'No, my lord,' he said, to a tall white-faced veteran, who stopped for a moment in passing, 'I'm not dancing to-night. Must retire in favour of the young blood.'

Then he turned to Marqueray.

'As you thought,' he said shortly, 'Meerut, and spreading rapidly. Get the other chaps—Wylam, and the rest of them. Billiard-room, Field Club, ten minutes from now.'

Marqueray stepped down from the dais and disappeared in the throng, engagement card in hand. He had apparently succeeded in deciphering the name of his partner for the next dance.

In the compound, under the shadow of the mystic jungle grass, in the witching light of a waning moon, with the sound of the music reaching them through the wizard whisper of the breeze, Harry and Maria still sat side by side.

The hand and arm so negligently left within his reach were still free, but Harry's lips were nearer to the averted cheek. He was talking rapidly and with emphasis, as young men will. And she had admitted, after much persuasion and with the sweetest reluctance in the world, that she would be as well pleased should her future partners fail to find her. Perhaps she had admitted other things as well, when Marqueray's firm tread on the gravel startled them both.

'Wylam,' he said, as he approached.

'Yes,' answered Harry angrily, with a muttered oath, which must have shocked Maria sorely.

'One minute, please. Excuse me, Miss Lamond.'

He drew Harry aside, and spoke rapidly in a whisper. Harry's eyes blazed, and he began answering excitedly, when Marqueray's gloved fingers closed his mouth.

'I will take you to your father,' he said to Maria the next minute. 'I am afraid I must go.'

And as Maria took her partner's arm she turned with eyes full of hatred, and looked at Marqueray, who returned her gaze steadily.

*(To be continued.)*

## *At the Sign of the Ship.*

'RELIGION and Politics,' said the editor of a domestic magazine, 'are the only subjects worth writing about, and the only subjects about which I may not write.' About Religion (except that of savage and ancient peoples) I do not desire to improve the occasion, but if any critic thinks that I have no remarks to make on Politics, he is entirely mistaken. However, this is not the place wherein one can speak his mind about Americans, Armenians, Boers, Cape intriguers, Dutch, English, French, Germans, Hibernia, Jameson, Krüger—it is a pretty little political alphabet, but not to be discoursed of here.

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Last month I published, or alluded to, the spirited remonstrance of a lady, who was dreadfully bored by the kinds of topics here treated of, and by the manner of treatment. I promised that, if I could, I would endeavour to please the minds of the fair, and, turning over themes of interest to them, that of Twins presents itself. Far be it from me to give forth such notions as Mrs. Gamp, on a celebrated occasion, demanded from Mr. Pecksniff. I take twins at the embarrassing age when, if both are boys or both are girls, the fondest and most experienced mother does not know 't'other from which'—cannot distinguish between her dear ones. This is awkward. I have read of a lover who was betrothed to one twin, but *which* he knew not. This gave him and the beautiful sisters no concern while he was alone with a twin. But, in a fatal moment of curiosity, he embraced one twin (the right one he thought) while she was sitting on a garden seat with the other. Both young ladies burst into indignant tears, and fled to their separate apartments. This broke off the engagement. For the truth of the story I do not vouch, but, even were it a parable, it might serve as a lesson to mothers.

Without presuming to dictate, I would suggest that twins might 'do their hair' in different ways, and so set up a point of distinction. Yet, if only one way of doing the hair is fashionable at a given period, none but a true, gentle, loving twin, imbued with the sweet spirit of self-sacrifice, will consent to do *her* hair in the unfashionable way. Of course, what is becoming to one is, *ex hypothesi*, becoming to the other, yet one must give up this advantage, and get no credit for it either, nobody knowing which is the renouncing spirit. Even if they do it on alternate days, things get mixed.

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A bad plan is suggested in a new novel called *Adventure*. A gipsy marks twins—boys—one with half a circle (blue) on his wrist, the other with half a circle *reversed*. One twin has the lower, the other the upper, segment. Consequently, when one twin commits a murder and highway robbery, the other (an exemplary man) is caught and transported. That gipsy was an ass. Clearly it would have sufficed to tattoo the first twin and leave the second alone. Speaking to mothers, I do not recommend tattooing daughters by way of establishing their identity. As long as they are children, nobody sees the tattoo marks, if on the arms; and when the dear girls 'come out,' and wear low dresses, tattoo marks excite too much notice, not of the right kind. The problem is beset by difficulties, and any practical suggestions will be gladly received.

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Mothers, I have often remarked, are wont to entertain pessimistic views, and declare that 'all is over with the Army,' like Balbus, because of the hardness of examinations. Nobody, they aver, can have a healthy body (so necessary to a warrior) who is compelled to studies so arduous before he can serve Her Majesty on the field of renown. This is a frequent theme with ladies, whose own brave boys have been spun, or ploughed, and who cannot even 'get in through the Militia'—a byeway. But among the subalterns whose acquaintance I have the honour to possess, I do not remark either the pale cast of thought or any lack of muscles, or even too manifest symptoms of commanding genius, literary or scientific. They 'do themselves very well,' as they say; their conversation is not exclusively devoted to the things of the intellect. In poetry they appear to prefer the artless *Volkslieder* of the music halls to the works of Mr. Robert Browning.

Some may, indeed, fatigue their minds by attempts to get the solution of double acrostics out of their acquaintances, but this is not the fault of the Army Examiners. In brief, I cannot think that the examinations which these gallant youths have successfully passed can really be so stringent and abstruse as to damage the brain, or sow the seeds of consumption. To mothers, this ought to be a comforting reflection in one way, though, on the other hand, it may suggest that their unsuccessful offspring must be very stupid or very idle, or both.

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As to sleeves, the fashions come slowly up this way, and do not seem to be settled by Universal Woman's Suffrage. For the majority of women are not tall and shapely, and only the shapely and the tall can wear with decorum sleeves which make every woman under five feet eight look at least as broad as she is long. On bicycles short ladies, so clad, are indeed unlovely objects, not to mention the resistance which such sleeves oppose to the wind. Why women, to whom they are grossly unbecoming (the vast majority), submit to the tyranny of these sleeves, I know not. Who would be free themselves must use the scissors, if dress-makers won't. Friends of the Enfranchisement of Women should reflect on this topic, which offers arguments to the adversary.

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At what age should a lady discard hats in favour of the more mature and matronly bonnet? Here is a subject for a 'symposium.' I am credibly informed that ladies even over f—ty still appear in hats often of enormous size and prismatic splendour. It is urged that such head-gear is neither appropriate, becoming, nor deceptive. This is a topic of extreme delicacy, and perhaps no hard and fast line, or demarcation based on age, can be laid down. A recent writer, 'George Fleming,' maintained that women, in the matter of dress, always look at each other, and never look at themselves, do not see themselves 'steadily and whole,' as Sophocles regarded human existence. If this be true, the attitude of woman, on a most important point, is radically wrong, and George Fleming ought to know.

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I append a few answers to fair correspondents:

*Lydia Dick.*—For freckles try muriatic acid, applied with a



camel's hair brush, the hair taken from a camel which has made the Pilgrimage to Mecca.

*Barba Rossa.*—If he really loves you, he will find means of explaining his sentiments. Yes, I approve of your conduct as regards the Captain. That should bring him to the point.

*Livre d'Or.*—The third daughter of a Baronet takes precedence over the widow of a Knight of more recent creation.

*Violet Lebas.*—I am unable to trace the authorship of the lines—

‘Life is real, life is earnest,  
And the grave is not its goal.’

They remind me of Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*. No, *In Memoriam* is not ‘by the widow of a military man.’

*Spectatrix.*—Instances of dogs learning to read are uncommon : the case which you mention needs confirmation. Submit your suffering cat to the new electric photographic process. From the symptoms described I fear she has swallowed a golf ball. You *might* ‘get it out’ with a niblick, but the operation is dangerous and may be painful.

*Cleek.*—Yes, Mr. Tait and Mr. Maclaren, in a foursome, *did* ‘come in’ in thirty-four, and I believe this is a ‘record.’ Your own score of 231 indicated perseverance, rather than great natural gifts for the game. Struggle on !

*Economist.*—Your little boy's reluctance to wear the knickerbockers made out of the old billiard table cloth is, perhaps, not unnatural. I do not wonder at his complaint about the pockets, and his indignation about the spot is pardonable in one so young.

*Fashion.*—No, it is the Duchess's business to call first. It is usual to introduce a lady as ‘The Honourable Mrs.’ or ‘Miss.’

*Harriet.*—In keeping company, the gentleman takes the lady's arm, and pays for refreshments.

*Historica.*—As you justly remark, the Order of the Garter *cannot* have been founded before the invention of stockings in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. I have never seen this fundamental objection to the ordinary legend raised before. I am sorry that the Examiners did not take your view of the point : write to *The Journal of Education*.

*Industries.*—A successful typewriter must be able to read handwriting. If you can read mine you can read anybody's, except that of Professor — of Harvard.

*School Girl.*—Every one must sympathise with your chagrin. Jam, and *not* the kind of missive you describe, is what you have a right to expect in a three-cornered tart.

*Novelist.*—No, I doubt if any manufacturer of steel pens will advertise widely your statement that you wrote *Mildred the Moonstruck* with a gilt J, though I agree with you that it would be a capital thing for your novel if he did. The suggestion, however, does credit to your originality and gift of invention. I also agree with you in hoping that if the United States annex Canada (in compliance with the Monroe doctrine) we shall not have any more fuss about Canadian Copyright.

*Ignorama.*—The 'Oxford Movement,' concerning which you inquire, was an agitation in favour of altering the Rule about Leg Before Wicket in favour of the Bowler. It was, unluckily, unsuccessful.

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And now 'suppose we join the gentlemen!'

\* \*

An idea for a new book occurs to me, *not* a novel, yet not unreadable perhaps. Having no use for the idea myself, I make a present of it to any young man of taste and industry. In a sense it is a work of literary history, yet it is not part of the history of literature, and it is still less a Manual for the behalf of schools or persons exposed to University Extension.

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In short, this wonderful book should be a history of the personal interrelations, of enmity, amity, hatred, contempt, affection, reconciliation and so on of that large and distinguished set of poets and men of letters who 'flourished' between 1790 and 1840. Numerous as they were, and widely sundered as they were by space, in days before railways, by differences of taste and of politics, by jealousies and all uncharitableness, they were yet all entangled in a net of ramified connections. From the cedars of Lebanon, Wordsworth, Byron, Scott, to the hyssop on the literary wall, Darley, Cornelius Webb, Patmore, Lloyd, they were all *in touch*. Even members of the fanatically opposed politico-literary parties, those about Leigh Hunt, and those about Christopher North, had common friends, and occasionally met at good men's tables. The literary world was a little *imperium in*

*imperio*: it was a kind of state apart, with its own politics, unions and breaks-up of ministries, formation and dissolution of alliances. The peculiar position of Edinburgh at this period made the whole state of the literary Republic more complicated and interesting. In curious personal details and odd traits of character the topic is rich. The men concerned were almost all eminent, and extremely human; the meanest of them has left a *nominis umbra*. They had strong passions, they loved, praised, hated, traduced, libelled, challenged, fought, made peace, in a manner most intricate and ramified. The allies of one year were the enemies of the next, or *vice versa*, as Moore and Jeffrey, Leigh Hunt and Byron, Byron and literary mankind in general, Haydon and Hazlitt, Hazlitt and the Lakers, Southey and the *Quarterly* people, Lamb and Southey. Coleridge you never knew where to look for, and Scott you could always find, perfectly friendly with every one who would be friends, and absolutely ignoring the hostile minority.

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Fragments of this mighty maze are familiar to every reader. In this or that biography or correspondence, of Byron, of Wordsworth, of Coleridge, of Keats, of Lamb, of Southey, we come across broken lights and detached incidents. These, however, as far as I know, have never yet been combined into a clear, intelligible, concise history of the literary republic of England, in its personal and biographical aspect, during the years, say, of the literary life of Southey. The historian would, of course, be all the better for access to unpublished materials. But abundance of published materials exist, forgotten, dusty, half lost in unessential verbiage, in old magazines and reviews and the huge selected correspondence of Southey.

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This is not a book for a dull plodding genius to construct with scissors, paste, and perseverance. The Editor must read far and wide, must select and assimilate his materials, must often reject the accidental, must view the whole field from the crests of Skiddaw, Eildon, and Primrose Hill, must never lose his clue in the labyrinth, must be the Gibbon of his little historical field. To read his book (and perhaps review it) when it is done is all the reward I ask for my suggestion. It is not so easy to see where the writer is to be found. Perhaps the late Mr. Dykes Campbell might have been the man, but he did not work rapidly enough—

he could not have finished the work in half a century. Yet it is not to be a long work. A quarter of the size of Mr. Purcell's antediluvian monster of a biography of Cardinal Manning would be large enough, though it deals with scores of men far greater than the Cardinal. It would be invidious to mention the names of the living critics who are too inaccurate, or too long-winded, or *too jolly stupid*, or too one-sided, or too ill-informed about any but the newest books for the purposes of the work I desire. When it was written, moreover, the public (though wholly unacquainted with the topics) would, perhaps, decide that the topics were old, stale, and out of date; yet they cannot be so out of date as that eternal, tedious Oxford Movement. That galvanised, dry, clerical mummy trots across the stage three or four times a year, and will trot till all the letters of all the worthy parsons who piously beat the bush, and never started the hare, have been printed for the desolation of mankind. Oh, Gorham, and Hampden, and Newman, and Ward, and 'the set of d——d idiots at Oriel' (I quote J. G. Lockhart), and Pusey, and Hurrell Froude, and all the minor stars in the Inky Way, are we *never* to hear the last of you? Are Gorham, and Hampden, and Ward for ever to be dragged from the sepulchres where we thought they slept

'The endless, long, and unawaking sleep'?

If the public will stand them, it ought to revel in the book which I suggest—a book about better men than the Oxford Movers, and better matter than the Thirty-nine Articles. To be sure there will be nothing about Mr. Gladstone in the tomes I long for—that, indeed, is a serious objection.

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#### THE FAIRIES PORTION.

Milk for the chieftain an' his leddy,  
 Gae bring it hame an' hae it ready,  
     My fair-haired lassie;  
 But spill a taste on the Fairy Knowe  
 Whar grass is greenest an' sourocks grow,  
 An' shadows fa' frae the hazel bough;  
     Forget na, lassie.

Milk for the fisher an' the reaper,  
 For the waukrife auld, an' the young-faced sleeper  
     Bare fitted lassie,

*AT THE SIGN OF THE SHIP.*

Carry it safely doon the glen ;  
But hae in mind the Quiet Men,  
Gie them ae drap for our ilka ten ;  
Forget na, lassie.

An' so in ease we'll bide an' peace,  
Our corn shall rise, our sheep increase,  
My smilin' lassie.  
The Guid Folk to the kind are kind,  
They'll no untie the sheaf we bind,  
Nor tak' at nicht whate'er we find  
By daylight, lassie.

Alow the stars they'll whirl an' fling  
Wi' twinklin' feet i' their emerald ring,  
My willin' lassie ;  
Nor ever think a thocht o' harm,  
Nor ever need a holy charm,  
An' we shall live without alarm,  
So mind them, lassie !

NIMMO CHRISTIE.

ANDREW LANG.

